



**CHILDREN'S CULTURE AND THE STATE : SOUTH  
AUSTRALIA  
1890s - 1930s.**

by

**MARGARET P. PETERS, B.Ed. (Adel.); B.Ed., Applied  
Linguistics (Flinders); Dip.T. (U. of S.A.); Grad.  
Dip.Ed.Admin. (Adel.)**

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## **DECLARATION**

I certify that this thesis does not include any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any University. Moreover, to the best of my knowledge it does not contain any material previously written or published by another person, unless duly acknowledged.

I consent to the thesis being made available for photocopying and loan if accepted for the award of the degree.

Margaret Peters.  
December 1991.

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the social construction of 'childhood' in South Australia, between the 1890s and the 1930s. While it focuses on the role of the state in this process, the thesis draws heavily on oral narratives to analyse the complexity and contradictoriness<sup>77</sup> involved in the construction of 'childhood' and its attendant discursive practices. More specifically, the thesis analyses the ways in which children's play was postulated as the proper medium of expression for children, becoming a central pedagogic device within which 'the child' was to be re-constructed as an object of calculation and normalisation.

Informed by Foucauldian theory, and underpinned by socio/psycho-linguistic theory, this thesis seeks to render 'the state' and 'the child' problematics in 'the history of education' and 'the history of childhood' - indeed, the notion of 'history' is postulated as problematic, too. Central to this thesis is the belief that 'history' is not universal or linear; there are many beginnings, many possibilities and many 'histories'.

This thesis poses the question of multiple subjectivities as a factor in social change. It is argued that central to the production of images, discourses, social practices and construction, and other 'representations' of meaning is an understanding of the ways in which 'the child' is constructed and re-constructed within multiple subject positionings, at a given historical moment. Networks of power/knowledge relations are analysed in various sites - 'the home' and 'the family'; 'the streets' and 'the community'; 'the school' and 'the playground'; and 'the body'. As children's culture is located along topographical grids of age, gender, class and race, it is postulated that the notion of a 'rational unified being' is a materialist and metaphysical myth. Through re-memorisation, the profound effect mythology has on lived experience is traced.

The thesis concludes that the material, psychical and semiotic lives of children, their cultural experiences, particularly their play practices, underwent massive transformation by the end of the 1930s, in South Australia - and posits that such changes were frequently contradictory and were implicated in vast governmental incursions into the sphere of familial and personal relationships.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In perusing the acknowledgments contained in other theses it is obvious that, as examples of gendered discourses, these 'tributes' would make wonderful material for analysis in their own right. Mine will not prove an exception.

The genesis of this thesis was/is a legacy of my childhood. Perhaps the greatest accident of all (at least prior to genetic engineering) was the luck of whose child one was born. Enmeshed in familial relations that were at once accepting, stimulating, complex and conflictual, I carry with me memories of a maternal grandfather who was my first - and best - storyteller; a mother who - as mentor, friend and conscience - encouraged my dreams and always travels with me in their pursuit; a father who delighted in 'passing on' his treasury of childhood folklore - particularly rhymes and jokes; and, a sister who accepted and supported me, not in spite of my differences and idiosyncrasies but because of them. Combined with the ministrations of a wise and influential maternal grandmother, I have been formed and re-formed in and through this network of individuals. I cherish their support.

That this thesis is in existence is due, in large part, to Dr. Ian Davey. His constant guiding, prodding, challenging and encouragement has supported me in its production. I have benefitted not just from his wisdom but from his patience and endurance. It has been a fascinating four and a half years joint enterprise.

The men and women who shared their stories with me are the core of this thesis. They not only included me in their lives but entrusted me not to abuse this privilege. I am in their debt. Hopefully, when the full transcripts are lodged in the Mortlock Library of South Australiana, their narratives will become part of 'public' history.

Many friends and colleagues supported, usually by NOT asking when the thesis would be finished. I will thank them in person. Ina Cooper must be thanked for her wonderful transcriptions which gave me the time to devote to other necessary tasks. That she sped to Queensland to live straight after is no surprise. To my rescue came Sharon Lewis whose generous nature has been severely tested by the ordeal of typing this thesis. That she has succeeded so well is evident in the excellent presentation of this thesis. I am indeed grateful to her.

My sons, Nicholas and Matthew, were born as this project began. They have proved a constant source of comfort in their unfailing belief that I would one day finish 'my book'. I have been fortunate to have them as 'touchstones' when I frequently muddled my priorities. Along with my parents, Dean has been unyielding in his support of me. The fact that he never complains about the constant demands I make of him, I find extraordinary.

## INTRODUCTION

Play has been likened to everything but it has too rarely been viewed as a theoretical resource for the study of itself. How Australian children play, either by themselves or with other children, has been of interest to historians and students of folklore<sup>1</sup>, but has, with one major exception, not been accompanied by detailed and specific research into an historiography of children's play practices since European settlement.<sup>2</sup> While there has been a significant increase in recording the history of childhood in Australia<sup>3</sup> and in the reminiscences of childhood experiences<sup>4</sup> it has been largely the relationships between the children, their parents, the school and the State that has been studied. The centrality of play to the lives of children in the past remains either embedded in layers of official sources and documents or, as often was the case, unseen and therefore unrecorded.

Of interest then is that this lack of awareness of children's daily play in the past, particularly their unsupervised activities, has been accompanied this century by many

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Jean Duruz, Australian Child-Life 1890-1910. Unpublished B.A. thesis, Sydney University, 1969. June Factor, 'Fragments of Children's Play in Colonial Australia' in Guy Featherstone (ed.) The Colonial Child, Melbourne, Royal Historical Society of Victoria, 1981, pp.56-61. June Factor, All Right Vegemite!, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1983. Far Out Brussell Sprout!, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1983. Unreal, Banana Peel!, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1986. Real Keen, Baked Bean, Hodder and Stoughton, Melbourne, 1989. Dorothy Howard, 'Ball-Bouncing Customs and Rhymes in Australia' in Midwest Folklore, Vol. IX No.2 1957, pp77-87. Wendy Lowenstein, Shocking, Shocking, Shocking, The Improper Play-Rhymes of Australian Children, Melbourne, 1986, and Ian Turner, June Factor and Wendy Lowenstein, Cinderella Dressed in Yella, Heinemann Educational Australia 1978 (Second Edition).

<sup>2</sup> The major exception is June Factor's Captain Cook Chased a Chook, Children's Folklore in Australia, Penguin Books, Australia Ltd. 1988.

Aboriginal children's play is not encompassed in this thesis as it demands detailed research in its own right. It is my belief that such a study is most fittingly 'organised' by members of Aboriginal groups themselves. For a list of selected published and unpublished material on Aboriginal children's play lore, see J. Factor, Children's Folklore in Australia: An Annotated Bibliography. Australian Children's Folklore Publications, Melbourne, 1986.

<sup>3</sup> See, in particular, Jan Kociumbas, Children and Society in N.S.W. and Victoria 1860-1914. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis. University of Sydney, 1983.

<sup>4</sup> An example of the genre is Margaret Barbalet's, Far From a Low Gutter Girl. The Forgotten World of State Wards. South Australia 1887-1940, Melbourne, 1983.

dire predictions, from both Australian and overseas writers, citing 'changes' in children's play as evidence of the increasing standardisation of children's lives. Paul Brewster, in his book American Non-singing Games, wrote:

Supervised play has taken the place of the earlier spontaneous and hence more enjoyable playing and has made participation in games a mechanical performance, instead of the delight it once was and which it should be still.<sup>5</sup>

As earlier British writer, Norman Douglas, stated:

One marvels at the stupidity of the social reformer who desires to close to the children of the world of adventure, to take them from their birthright of the streets, and coop them up in well regulated and uninspiring playgrounds where under supervision of teachers, their imagination will decline, their originality wither.<sup>6</sup>

Many similar statements could be quoted.<sup>7</sup> Recorded observations tend to be illuminative however less for their understanding of the nature and characteristics of actual children's play practices than for their ideological bias. They reveal much about theoretical concepts of childhood, little about actual daily practice, and even less about personal childhood experience. Consider the following observation:

It is perfectly true that the great majority of children are sadly deficient in the personal charm of pleasing manners.... They are very excitable by temperament and scamper to the doors, windows, fence or gate, at every possible opportunity to cheer or yell. They love to watch processions, funerals or a circus; crowd to football games, prize-fights, races or any manner of sport at which those of tender years are allowed. They bet, barrack and manifest for 'their' side, regardless of fair play or other 'considerations'. Crowding the picture-shows, they scream, shout, and fairly roar, hoot or clap in following the key-note sounded by the audience.... A love for healthy sport is wholesome,... but an overdeveloped love for pleasure and excitement is bad, very bad.<sup>8</sup>

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5 Paul G. Brewster, American Non-Singing Games. Norman, Oklahoma, 1953, pxx.

6 Norman Douglas, London Street Games. London, 1931, p.xi.

7 For example, C. Deslisle Burns, Leisure in the Modern World. London, 1932, p.126, A Gesell, The Child from Five to Ten. New York, 1946, p.363. H.C. Lehmann and P.A. Witty, The Psychology of Play Activities. New York, 1927, p.225, and, H. Marshall, 'Children's Play, Games and Amusements', in C. Murchison, (ed.) Handbook of Child Psychology. London, 1933 p.524.

8 Jessie Ackermann, Australia From a Woman's Point of View. Facsim, Ed., Melbourne. Cassell and Co., Australia, 1981, p.80. Originally Published, London, Cassell and Co., 1913.



Does one interpret this statement as important sociological evidence that children's lives at the turn of the century were unsupervised and unprotected and that later writers could justifiably cite such source material as evidence that their lives increasingly became standardised as adults involved themselves in the organisation and supervision of children's play? Or does one interpret Ackermann's writing solely as an example of what the 'author' considered to be appropriate and inappropriate childhood behaviour, a belief which was coloured by prevailing ideological and pedagogical opinion. Investigation into the past poses the constant dilemma of how to read the text, who is saying what to whom, and why.

The primary concern of this thesis is an exploration of the social and governmental structuring of children's play during the latter part of the nineteenth and early decades of the twentieth century in South Australia. Analysis of the attempts to transform play practices is located within wider attempts to restructure the 'nature' and the 'needs' of childhood and family life. Therefore, as relatively little can be known of actual childhood play practices in the past, apart from re-memorisation, the thesis focuses initially on attempting to understand the needs and characteristics of childhood play and its changing nature by simultaneously discerning those adults and governmental organisations who created and transmitted theories about ideal play patterns, examining the 'motives' for cultural change, and, the memories of some of the 'recipients' of these technologies. (A detailed analysis of the 'process' of memory reconstruction is contained in Chapter One.)

The period under study is somewhat arbitrary, as the focus of the thesis is not to be defined by a strict chronology, but was selected due to its significance as a transition from the nineteenth century to the 'modern era' of the early twentieth century, from a basically pre-industrial, colonial Australian society to the late 1930s, which in itself heralded the beginnings of a new style of consumerist culture associated with advanced industrial capitalism. South Australia in the 1880s was experiencing deteriorating economic conditions. Many parents limited the number of children in an effort to better meet the medical and educative prescriptions for child-rearing, and various theories began to circulate of how the family was a bulwark of morality and an important demographic

resource.<sup>9</sup> The economic depression of the 1890s stands as a climax for the expansion of ideological advice throughout the century, increasing the challenge to the State of finding methods to shelter and educate the children of the numerous poor, and opening an unprecedented market for suggestions and initiatives from social theorists.<sup>10</sup>

The rise of militant unionism and fear of socialism was a further stimulus to theories of how society might be welded into a classless whole with the family as its core.<sup>11</sup> During this decade, and its immediate aftermath, the Children's Protection Acts, the Kindergarten Movement, the Child Study Organisations, the 'new' education and the infant welfare movement were manifestations of the creation and transmission of ideology by groups strongly committed to advising the State on how best to protect and 'save' the child, and through it the existing structure of society.

The history of planned British settlement in South Australia dates from 1836. Records available of childhood in the first decades of settlement suggest that because children were an economic asset in pioneering economy, they often had little spare time to play.<sup>12</sup> Where they did have spare time they tended to use it, especially the boys, in exploring the bush life and in adventures offered by the natural environment, rather than in playing traditional games. Swimming, climbing trees, exploring, making shanghais, fishing, hunting rabbits and possums were among some of the leisure activities.<sup>13</sup> With the consolidation of settlement, however, more regular opportunities arose for children to

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<sup>9</sup> For an overview as to how census statisticians' reports were used to make political interventions see D. Deacon, 'Political Arithmetic : the Nineteenth Century Census and the Construction of the Dependent Women' in SIGNS : Journal of Women in Culture and Society. Winter 1984.

<sup>10</sup> See Brian Dickey, No Charity There. A Short History of Social Welfare in Australia. Melbourne, Nelson, 1980.

<sup>11</sup> See B. Cohen and B. Scull (eds.), Social Control and the State. New York, 1983, for a collection of essays which detail ways in which this concept has been utilised.

<sup>12</sup> For a pertinent reminiscence see Robert Ross, 'Country Life in the later Nineteenth Century' in South Australiana. Vol.xii, No.2, September 1973, pp.47-56.

<sup>13</sup> See the recollections of Sir Joseph Verco 'A Colonial Boy-Hood, 1858-1867', in South Australiana. Vol.xi, No.2, September, 1963. pp.61-100, for a sharply contrasting picture of leisured urban boyhood.

play and develop formal games. Singing games and tagging games became an established part of community picnics which were held from the earliest years. These picnics increased in number and popularity in the latter years of the nineteenth century and continued to grow in importance until after the First World War. Parlour games were in abundance as a form of home recreation in the early years, although mainly restricted to the homes of the affluent. During the last decade of the nineteenth century, the use of these parlour games in Bible-class and church socials brought them to a much wider section of the population.<sup>14</sup>

The most important place in which the children of the day learned their formal games was the school playground. Since the proclamation of the colony, but more particularly after the introduction of partially compulsory education in 1875, the school became the most important centre for children's play. Before the establishment of the local school there was seldom a general community centre, particularly in the rural areas, where all the children could and did play regularly. With the compulsion of school attendance, children were regularly brought into an environment conducive to common play.<sup>15</sup> In such circumstances play, particularly games, proliferated. The period between 1880 and 1900, according to collected data, would appear to have been the zenith of traditional games in South Australia. Playground games were managed entirely by the children themselves, there was no adult organisation of play and little playground supervision. The greater part of the children's play equipment was made by themselves. Older children played at games which now are played, if at all, only by younger children - for example, Horses, Marbles, Tops, Singing games and Hoops.<sup>16</sup> Secluded from the boys

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<sup>14</sup> See William Kelly, 'Biographical Reminiscences of the Kelly Family' unpublished memoirs, p.12. This manuscript is held in the Mortlock Library of South Australiana and focuses on the period from the 1850's to World War 1.

<sup>15</sup> This is not to suggest that school loomed large in the lives of all South Australian children in the nineteenth century. See, for example, Ian Davey, 'Growing up in South Australia.' in Eric Richards (ed.) The Flinders History of South Australia. Social History. Wakefield, 1986, and Kerry Wimshurst, 'Street Children and School Attendance in South Australia, 1886-1915'. Unpublished M.Ed. Thesis, Flinders University, 1979.

<sup>16</sup> See Verco, 'A Colonial Boy-hood', pp.69-71, for a description of the way in which he played many of these games.

the girls played games such as Knucklebones, Cat's Cradle, as well as singing games.<sup>17</sup> Organised sports competitions between schools was to come much later, changing forever the concept and symbolism of a leisured class.<sup>18</sup>

Between 1900 and 1920 there was an increase in playground supervision and teacher coaching of children in organised sports, with the result that there was a decrease in the number of rougher games, such as Buck-Buck, and practices of earlier years. Many boisterous running games of boys were subsumed in football and cricket practice.<sup>19</sup> This period also witnessed a heightening of activities for girls and the beginnings of the widespread commercial influence upon children's play which was to have so much importance after the First World War. The playground of these years saw also the introduction and growth of swapping games, scrapbooks, transfers, prick books, post cards, and pastimes derived from an interest in the children's columns of the weekly journals. Such informal activities acted as a taming force of the playground. They also reflected the increasing introduction into the playground of games which were of a quieter nature, and, as such, they represented the first steps in the transference of children's play interests from the world of their own play objects to a world of play objects contrived by adults, partly out of a realisation of the perceived needs of children and partly for commercial purposes.

From 1920 onwards the enormous influence of the toy business on children's free activities, the great importance attributed to organised sports and recreation for children, and the urban structure of the 'modern' world, led to changes - or the demise - of a great many of the traditional games. At the age of eleven or twelve children became increasingly channelled into organised sports, whereas in previous decades children in this age group had maintained the more complex traditional games. This is not to suggest that spontaneous

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17 For a collection of gender specific games of the era see Turner, Factor and Lowenstein, Cinderella Dressed in Yella.

18 See John Daly, 'Play and Display. A study of the sporting behaviour of a colonial upper class.', in Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia. No. 5, 1978. pp.3-18.

19 According to reminiscences, many of these rougher games continued to be played beyond the supervision of adults. This is discussed more fully later in the thesis.

play amongst these older children ceased; rather, more time was spent playing their own unorganised variations of the major sports than playing the sports themselves. New games seldom arose from such play. From the nineteen twenties onwards younger children assumed the mantle of maintaining the older traditional games which had been played by their predecessors.<sup>20</sup> This was particularly true of the girls, who now had a much greater freedom to play than young girls had in the nineteenth century.

Whereas Horses, Tops, Hoops and Marbles were played in the eighteen-nineties by twelve-year-old children, only the very young of the nineteen-twenties onwards continued to do so. Play objects and toys became more numerous but, on the whole, were of a more artificial, commercial nature. The construction of home-made play objects, such as bows and arrows, pea-shooters, whips, catapults, and kites continued to take place but by the under-ten years old bracket. Singing games also passed down the age-scale to girls of seven, eight and nine years. The play object of the 'modern' era playground became the ball. With its various shapes and sizes it replaced most other play objects used in unorganised games. Sutton-Smith contrasted the static qualities of stagknives, pocketknives, knucklebones, marbles et al. with the swiftness and motility of the ball and evaluated this as an index of the increase in playground speed over the passing of time.<sup>21</sup> A similar observation could equally be made about the swiftness the post twenties Australian playground exhibited in relation to its predecessor. Just as the passing of time affected the speed of the playground so it affected the 'seasons' of playground game playing. In the earlier periods the seasonal boundaries within any one school were relatively rigid. However this was a state of affairs which could continue only so long as the children's playgroup was always the arbiter of its own play destiny, as was the case when its play objects were chiefly of its own manufacture and its play occasions under its own control.

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<sup>20</sup> Other overseas writers have commented that, with the passing of time, different kinds of games have 'passed down' to younger children than those who played in previous decades. See particularly, Brian Sutton-Smith, The Games of New Zealand Children. University of California Press, 1959, and, Philippe Ariès, Centuries of Childhood : A Social History of Family Life. Trans R. Baldick. London, Jonathon Cape. 1962. First published as L'enfant et la vieu familiale sous L'ancien régime.

<sup>21</sup> Sutton-Smith, The Games of New Zealand Children. p.5.

Children's play habits became increasingly subject to the recurrent and unpredictable stimulation of novel play objects entering the toy market. The old seasons have been further disrupted by the fickleness of supply and demand in the economy of the twentieth century. Additionally, the children's world of play came under increasing adult scrutiny within educational, psychological, and commercial interests, resulting in their play world being influenced by 'laws' other than those narrowly conservative peer-group laws which previously dominated it. Adult imposed structures co-existed, not always happily, with the structures that children created for themselves.

The core argument of the thesis is therefore somewhat complex in that it deals with the broad mix of economic, social and cultural changes which took place in the structure of children's play patterns from the eighteen-nineties to late nineteen-thirties. It is not the purpose of this study to merely confine itself to an identification of the ideology makers and child 'savers' involved in this restructuring of the nature and needs of children's play. It is recognised that in order to assess how and why children experienced a wide range of changing notions about their play behaviour it is necessary to understand the motives of those adults who came to look upon structural changes to children's play as essential elements of modern nurturing. It is also proposed that essential to such an assessment are accounts of how children saw and experienced the structure of their own lives in relationship to their play, within such settings as the home, the schoolyard, the playground, the neighbourhood, the beach, the bush, and other locations.<sup>22</sup> Of immense interest also is an evaluation of the ways their play experiences differed according to gender, age, class, and ethnicity, as well as between the country and the city.

Many writers have contended that play as a recognised form of human behaviour, is of comparatively recent origin just as childhood is a novel concept. Ariès, through a study of themes of childhood as depicted in sculpture and portraiture of the Middle Ages, concluded that the discovery of childhood began in the thirteenth century but that the evidence of its development became more plentiful and significant from the end of the

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A rationale of the use of oral evidence in this thesis in addition to traditional historical sources is outlined in Chapter one of the thesis along with a discussion of some of the problems oral history poses.

sixteenth and throughout the seventeenth centuries.<sup>23</sup> Giotto, Durer, Bruegel and other painters of the Middle Ages 'reveal' that the conceptual category of 'child' was not invented until roughly the fourteenth century, for prior to that even anatomists' drawings of the period tended to show homonculi in uterus; that is the human male sperm was considered to contain hundreds of tiny, facsimiles of the adult which when implanted in the female grew into the 'typical little old men' of medieval times which is how such paintings typically depicted children. As the social entity 'child' has been depicted this century as an artefact of an historical process so, too, was the social entity 'child's play'.<sup>24</sup>

Such writings pose problems in that they fail to prove that the concept 'child' and 'child's play' did not exist prior to the rise of capitalism and that when the concept of 'childhood' is analysed it does not make any substantial distinctions between children and their play behaviour on the basis of class, gender, age, or urban-rural situation; nor do writers of this genre relate changes in child-rearing practices to changing modes of production or changing technology. As well, these writings do not give explicit recognition to a universal premise that children throughout the ages have needs which render them different from, and dependent upon, adults. It is the way in which these needs are discerned, defined and met, and the age at which these various needs and processes are defined and undertaken, which must be examined if one is to evaluate structural changes over time periods. It is crucial to identify and explain changing attitudes to children and interpretation of their play needs, rather than merely describe the process.

While it appears to be indisputable that one effect of the growth and secularisation of child-saving that occurred in the late nineteenth century was to increase forms of social control which kept the poor (and the rich) in their respective places,<sup>25</sup> to posit a conscious and conspiratorial motive on the part of the theorists and child-savers is to

<sup>23</sup> Philippe Ariès, Centuries of Childhood. For a pertinent critique of Ariès see Linda Pollock, Forgotten Children : Parent-Child Relationships from 1500 to 1900, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983.

<sup>24</sup> For research into this concept see G. Stone and A. Faberman, (eds.) Social Psychology through Symbolic Interaction. Lexington, Mass. Xerox College Publishing, 1970.

<sup>25</sup> See A. Platt, The Child Savers. The Invention of Delinquency, Chicago, 1969, and, A.P. Donajrodoski (ed.), Social Control in Nineteenth Century Britain. London, 1977.

impute to them a causative action many of them would have denied. In an effort to evaluate structural changes to children's play in the past, this study draws critically on the theory of the rise of a professional-managerial 'class' in late nineteenth-century western society in order to understand the question of a relationship between motive for social change in childhood play structures and the process by which that ideology underwent change during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Theorists<sup>26</sup> have proposed that there arose an identifiable, separate stratum within the 'older' bourgeoisie who, although from a wide range of occupations and remuneration, was united by a common education background and life-style, and a common lack of inherited power and wealth. Occupation was not found as employers or labourers but within the expanding area of salaried professionals as teachers, architects, engineers, statisticians and in public and private health. Within their individual professions, they were characterised by a search for autonomy from outside interference and control over methods of recruitment of new members, which was usually made conditional upon lengthy training.

This successful isolation from observability and evaluation, and limited proletariat membership, enabled the emerging professional groups to inflate their expertise in such a way as to enhance their social and financial status by presenting the undeniable and growing body of scientific knowledge, to which they alone had access, as indispensable to the ruling class in dealing with problems of class conflict and moral decline which were perceived to be threatening the status quo.

During the late nineteenth century it became apparent that as those groups which were beginning to guide the mother and the charitable organisations in the theory and practice of child socialisation, that is, the teachers, doctors, journalists and writers, and later the academics, were members of the professional-managerial 'class', and as such could be expected to adopt such definitions of childhood and play as would help to legitimise

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See particularly Barbara and John Ehrenreich. 'The Professional-Managerial Class' in Radical America. Vol.11, No.2, March-April 1971. pp.7-31.



their preoccupations with professional freedom, status and authority.<sup>27</sup> Such definitions were related less to the needs of the child than to themselves and their own class formation.

This study contends that emerging professional groups did not define childhood and the need to play solely in a manner which related to their own class formation needs but operated on a premise that the discovery and application of humane and scientific laws would constitute a new and effective source of remedies for social problems. This belief in, and appeal to, scientific knowledge brought a new and special intensity to their construction of the rights and welfare of the young, and distinguished it from that of the philanthropists, whose interventions on behalf of the child had been based on a very different foundation, even though it was itself beginning to be influenced by science. The scientific theorists claimed to be able to offer a just and humanitarian modification of capitalism, combined with elements of scientific objectivity in their growing fund of knowledge to speed up acceptance of their views. Certain knowledge, as evidenced by the effective and subtle socialisation techniques in the case of teachers, in relation to children's play patterns, helped to secure for these groups the special position of trust in society which they sought, and which in turn assured that their moral and cultural values became entrenched as objective 'social science.'<sup>28</sup>

The thesis traces the way in which, by their stated purpose of removing the more blatant injustices of childhood under capitalism and making the school and home life of every child - particularly their leisure time - conform to approved norms (said to transcend class) the professionals were able to be seen to be proceeding towards defusion of class issues and promoting the idea of the justice of meritocracy. Unprecedented claims could now be made for what might be achieved for society and race simply by focusing on the child and her or his play behaviour. Provided the State followed the advice of the professional experts and helped school and family to meet the needs of the impressionable and invaluable young, change in the broader structure of society was unnecessary.

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<sup>27</sup> See Peter Spearitt, 'The Kinder Movement. Tradition and Change' in D.E. Edgar, (ed.), Social Change in Australia. Readings in Sociology. Melbourne, 1974.

<sup>28</sup> For an overview of this utilisation of 'social science' see J.F. Cleverley and D.C. Phillips, From Locke to Spock. Melbourne, 1976.

Simultaneously, the professionals were ensuring the perpetuation of the existing system and improving their own position in it.

It is within this framework that the prescriptive and descriptive source material utilised in this thesis is examined. As much of the published literary evidence is obviously related to the activities of the professional-managerial 'class', deriving from their attempts to establish their authority on child nature and needs, there is little description given of how the children actually played (when, and with whom) but there is a great deal of pedagogic prescription. The descriptive personal literary evidence from the period is also to be considered within the professional pedagogic prescription prevailing at the time of the writer's written act.<sup>29</sup> It is unlikely that any of these writings were unaware of, or uninfluenced by professional theory, and in some cases the writers were professional theorists or followers of them.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, it is logical to assume, as Kociumbas has suggested,<sup>31</sup> that the kinds of experiences which were selected as noteworthy or as characteristic of childhood play, and the ideological colouring these accounts contained, were determined by prevailing professional theory. As such, these 'testimonies', while revealing all too little about the play of children, constitute a key means of assessing the influence of the makers of childhood ideology and observing the process of entrenchment of their ideas across time.

Children's play in the past, their games, songs, rhymes, toys, and oral traditions, is all too readily evaluated in the context of the present. Contemporary writers, when writing of play patterns in earlier times, tend to give emphasis to those aspects of children's play activities which are of importance in modern play theory, reifying the application of modern psychological techniques as universals, irrespective of time and

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<sup>29</sup> See Jan Kociumbas, 'Childhood History as Ideology', in Labour History, No.47, 1984. pp.1-17.

<sup>30</sup> See in particular Rosa Praed, My Australian Girlhood. London, 1902.

<sup>31</sup> Kociumbas, 'Childhood History as Ideology'.

place.<sup>32</sup> This largely evades and/or excludes attempts to explain the origins of late nineteenth and early twentieth century socialisation ideals of children's play, and ignores why these prevailing influences, which led to changes in play behaviour, have also changed over time. Such an approach offers little scope for an exploration and explanation of why children's play activities increasingly came under the social microscope and why an attendant industry of play apparatus, not to mention play therapists, play psychologists, and other professionals, was spawned as being universally essential to children's needs and nature.

Although the thesis, in later chapters, discusses the phenomenon of play and play forms at great length, it is appropriate to advance a 'working definition of play' in order to explore some of its dimensions, and, in order to define the primary conceptual framework of this study. Huizinga, in formulating his now classic definition of play, concluded:

Summing up the formal characteristics of play we might call it a free activity standing quite consciously outside 'ordinary' life as being 'not serious', but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and utterly. It is an activity connected with no material interest, and no profit can be gained by it. It proceeds within its own proper boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner....<sup>33</sup>

This is, arguably the pivotal definition of the genre, yet paradoxically it is the definition which gave rise to heated debate amongst social scientists. Key words and phrases such as, 'not serious', 'no material interests', 'no profit', and 'according to fixed rules', formed the bases for many assumptions about play which are presently accepted as 'givens'. The problems of seriousness and productivity were much written about and debated,<sup>34</sup> while the other attributes of Huizinga's definition of play, that of 'absorbing

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32 See in particular Alyce Taylor Cheska (ed.), Play as Context. 1979. Proceedings of The Association for the Anthropological Study of Play. Leisure Press, N.Y. 1981, David F. Lancy and B. Allan Tindall (eds.), The Study of Play : Problems and Prospects. Leisure Press, N.Y., 1977, Michael A. Salter, Play : Anthropological Perspectives. Leisure Press, N.Y., 1978, Philippe Stevens Jr. Studies in the Anthropology of Play : Papers in Memory of B. Allan Tindall. N.Y. 1977, and, Helen B. Schwartzman, (ed.), Play and Culture. N.Y., 1980.

33 Johan Huizinga, Homo Ludens : A Study of the Play Elements in Culture. Boston, 1950, p.13.

34 In particular, see the works of Mihaly Csikszentimhaly, Flow : Studies of Enjoyment. Chicago, PHS Research, 1974, 'Play and Intrinsic Rewards.' in Journal of Humanistic

the player intensely and utterly', (the experimental aspect) has been largely ignored. Contemporary writings on play are mired in the assumption of a sharp dichotomy, between the two poles of 'play' and 'work'. It is often from this false dichotomy that attempts to recover children's play in the past are made; attempts which fail to recognise that play is activity, motor or imaginative, in which the centre of interest is process rather than goal. This is not to negate the presence of goals which do exist in play, but to suggest that these are of less importance in themselves than as embodiments of the processes involved in attaining them. Children themselves, past or present, hold the key to the answer to which is more important - the act of creating, that is the performance itself, or what is created.

Within this framework of study the generalist perspective of human play, as defined by Norbeck, is proposed. That is, play is:

...voluntary pleasurable behaviour that is separated in time from other activities and that has a quality of make-believe. Play thus transcends ordinary behaviour. Human play ... is conditioned by learned attitudes and values.... It is moulded by culture, consciously and unconsciously.<sup>35</sup>

Play is a multi-dimensional phenomenon which encompasses a variety of cultural activities ranging from solitary, or individual, play, to games, theatrical presentations, mimicry, and a variety of other expressive behaviour. Games constitute one of the most visible aspects of play, hence it is one of the more thoroughly studied aspects of play. Games are present in some form in all cultures. A game, as opposed to other activities of play, has been characterised by Roberts, Arth, and Bush as: (1) organised play, (2) competition, (3) two or more sides, (4) criteria for determining a winner, and (5) agreed upon rules.<sup>36</sup> In the twentieth century sporting events and activities are best regarded as specific types of games.

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Psychology. Vol.15, No.3, 1975. pp.41-63. Beyond Boredom and Anxiety. San Francisco, 1975. 'What Play Says About Behaviour', in Ontario Psychologist. Vol.8, No.2, 1976. pp.5-11, and 'Intrinsic Rewards and Emergent Motivation' in D. Greske and M. Leffer, (eds.), The Hidden Costs of Reward. N.Y. Erebaum 1978. Chapter 2.

35 Edward Norbeck, 'Man at Play' in Natural History. Special Supplement, December, 1971. pp.48-53.

36 John M. Roberts, Malcolm J. Arth and Robert R. Bush, 'Games in Culture' in American Anthropologist. Vol.61, No.4. 1959.

But it is not the intent of this thesis to add to the plethora of definitions of play that abound in the literature of the genre. This study is undertaken solely because play has rarely been studied for its own sake, as a behavioural phenomenon with unique characteristics of its own, independent of what it reveals about phylogenetic, social, affective, or cognitive adaptation. Play has been used as a means for studying other behaviours, but rarely has it been the direct focus of attention. It is precisely because children's play came to be viewed specifically as a means for regulating the behaviour of children in 'the way they ought to go', as well as a means to regulate the relations between class, gender, age groups, and urban-rural groups, that the phenomenon of children's play received increasing attention at the turn of this century. Such interest was not experientially based. The principles and the habits of the Australian population, including the children, came under increasing scrutiny, as did the modes of control.

The notion of 'children's play was/is enmeshed within the problematic of the notions of 'child' and 'childhood'. The positioning of these constructs have undergone major changes from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries. So much so, that many contemporary theorists view the notion of 'child' a priori, which obscures or elides the conditions of origin of 'the child' as an historical and philosophical construction - a 'child' whose development was defined in relation to a universal norm.

'The child', as sign, in nineteenth century discourse was positioned in relations of similarity and difference with/to other signs of 'work' and 'labour' and of 'child rescue'. In the twentieth century, 'the child' as sign came to be mapped and defined in relation to similarity or difference with other signs such as 'work' and 'play', 'activity', and 'experience', and this sign was read within, and subjected to, the discourse of 'schooling' and 'the classroom'. 'The child' as an object of adult gaze was to be relocated along a topographical grid of moral superintendence which would incorporate the historically changing positions of younger and older people, of 'girls' and 'boys' and of class relations. As such, it is necessary to explore the social meanings attached to 'child' and 'childhood' and to trace how they are calibrated and altered over 'time' in relation to each other. In tracing the changes to children's play practices one is simultaneously tracing the changes to the signification of 'child'.

In the twentieth century, 'the child' as sign was situated within a formal juridical framework of laws and regulations - juvenile justice, child protection and custody laws, school attendance laws and military, political and economic 'qualifications' and 'disqualifications'. Simultaneously, 'the child' as sign was posited within a vast range of 'natural' processes of biological and psychological development. Plotted on to the 'natural' grid of 'childhood', and overlaid with the insertion of the juridical, the emotional, physical, sexual and educational development of 'the child' could be observed, monitored and re-formed in his/her own self-interest.

The 'culture of childhood', in the early twentieth century, is positioned as a figuring of a 'natural' rites de passage towards adulthood, which involved a re-alignment of the network of power relations operating in and through families - what Zelizer referred to as a shift from the economically useful child to the economically useless but emotionally priceless one.<sup>37</sup> Yet, neither 'childhood' nor 'the child' is a self-evident, unitary or unproblematic entity. It involves multiple states of be-ing - a point discussed at length in the body of the thesis.

This leads to the next set of intellectual concerns from which this thesis draws, a complex area of social theory referring to the administration of children's social life under advanced industrial capitalism and the role of children's play, both supervised and unsupervised, therein. For the purpose of this introductory section an outline only of this composite theoretical framework will suffice, as the body of the thesis discusses in detail, draws upon, and develops the specific socio-cultural theoretical issues of language, power, knowledge and subjectivity which underpin this framework.<sup>38</sup> Extrapolation also occurs in the concluding section.

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37 V.A. Zelizer Pricing the Priceless Child : The Changing Social Value of Children. N.Y., Basic Books, 1985. Her comment that 'While the economically useful child was legally 'owned' by the father, the 'priceless' child is considered the mother's sentimental asset'. pp.159-160, is of interest to the dichotomisation of 'public'/'private' spheres which is discussed later in the thesis.

38 The work of Michel Foucault on the analysis of discourse in modern societies and, in particular, his concern with language, knowledge and power and subjectivity; 'traditional' Marxist theoretical concerns with 'class', 'ideology' and 'consciousness'; the Frankfurt School of German Western Marxism (a term coined by Merleau-Ponty in the post-war period and is defined most often as a response to the theoretical limitations of Leninism and the Social Democracy of the Second International). Its origins go back to Georg Lukacs

From these distinct traditions, of language, power, knowledge and subjectivity, this thesis attempts to offer a way of reading the intervention of the State in many areas of social life, highlighting the mode in which the play of children became both a target and an instrument of power as a consequence of changes in the relations between adults and children, parents and educators, and in the intensity of internal familial relationships.

Within Australian historical developments it can be argued that a power over children's play was established which was indissociable from other discourses which were its corollary, discourses which constructed 'normal' childhood behaviour and which, in turn, provided a number of appropriate positions from which such control and power might be directly exercised. The work of Gramsci and the conception of hegemony is of import to this thesis as it is within his work that an analysis of politics and power, freed from the limitations of economism and determination-in-the-final instance, was begun. It has been generally accepted that economism or economic reductionist theories of politics and power constituted the central target of Gramsci's work. He directly addressed the problem of politics, not by reducing the phenomena of power and politics solely to the form of the State, and thence to the economy or the economic level, but rather through the introduction of a positive conception of civil society, which is constituted as the mediating moment between the economic structure and the coercive form of the State.

The key concept in Gramsci's analysis of civil society is that of hegemony. The concept addresses not only the subtlety, complexity, durability, and apparent acceptability of bourgeois class rule in Western Europe, but in addition indicates that the political strategy of the subordinate classes must begin, with the transformation of civil society, with the ideological struggle. Gramsci's concept of hegemony refers to the process of intellectual and moral leadership throughout which consent is achieved or won and it includes, as Bobbio has noted:

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and Antonio Gramsci, but its chief manifestations were the work of the Frankfurt School in Germany and the existential Marxists in France after World War II with its attendant shift of critical theory away from the means and relations of production towards issues of everyday life and culture; and, feminist social theory, which addresses specific areas of marginalisation in contemporary society. These share, although from quite different perspectives, theoretical interests in the changing pattern of domination in modern society and the increasingly subtle forms of control of the individual.

...both the moment of political leadership and the moment of cultural leadership. Therefore it embraces, as its own bearers, not only the party but all other institutions of civil society (in Gramsci's meaning of the term) which have some connection with the elaboration and diffusion of culture.<sup>39</sup>

Hegemony is exercised, or consent is won, by means of and through a network of cultural institutions including schools, churches, the media, trades, unions, political associations and parties.<sup>40</sup>

Two significant aspects of Gramsci's work then are first, the beginnings of non-reductionist analysis of power and politics, and, second, a conceptualisation of these phenomena in terms other than the form of the State as a political-judicial organisation. In his work there seems to be a shift of emphasis from a conception of the institutional location of power in the form of the State to the conception of the ideological moment, where hegemony is achieved, or as Bobbio has formulated it, 'institutions are displaced by ideologies as the primary moment of history'.<sup>41</sup> Gramsci's conception of power, exercised at all levels of society rather than being localised in the repressive State apparatus, is not unlike the strategic conception of power developed in the work of Foucault. The theory of hegemony was meant to account for the active role of ideology and politics (the superstructure) in the class structure. Gramsci argued that, under capitalism, political domination is separate from economic exploitation. Unlike the feudal system, bourgeois civil society prescribes different locations for work and for force or coercion. The workers are not subject to the political will of the bourgeoisie in the way that the peasants were to that of nobility. Capitalism, according to Gramsci, asserts the hegemony or domination of the bourgeoisie through the mediations of politics and ideology. Ideology, then, is viewed as one aspect of the human production of culture, a process, according to Johnson, of creating systems of meaning with which to make sense of and act upon the material condition of

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39 N. Bobbio, 'Gramsci and the Conception of Civil Society', in C. Mouffe (ed.) Gramsci and Marxist Theory. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979, p.40.

40 For elaboration, see Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks. (ed.) Q. Hoare and G. Nowell Smith. London, Lawrence and Wishart. 1976, pp.55-60.

41 Bobbio, 'Gramsci and the Conception of Civil Society', pp.35-36.



existence.<sup>42</sup> Ideology does not function in a simple manner of imposition upon the individual, but is continually created and re-created by its participants through their becoming the subjects in ideology, a representation of reality, which assumes that they are already its subjects. Thus, ideologies concerning children as being innocent and in need of 'proper' direction addresses them as already constituted subjects, innocent and directionless, thereby reinforcing and recreating a social system in which this is how children are primarily defined. Gramsci's frequent reference to "Ethno-political hegemony" indicates the breadth of hegemony; the hegemony of the ruling block is seen not simply at the political level, but as affecting every aspect of social life and thought. Gramsci, therefore, examined ideology at its 'lower levels' as the accumulation of popular 'knowledges' and the means of dealing with everyday life - what he termed 'common sense'.

Within the context of South Australia, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the attempts by Gramsci's equivalent of the 'organic intellectuals', the emergent 'professional-managerial class', to produce ideologies of children's play on behalf of themselves and the dominant class which led to the 'national task' of the transformation of children's play behaviour can be 'read' as an attempt to produce cultural and capitalist hegemony. What is not so easy to 'read' is how children reacted to these forces to colonise their play and whether or not alternative ideologies and cultures arose from their resistances.

The logic of technical reason and the role of the emergent 'professional-managerial' groups in disseminating technocratic consciousness into the margins of daily life was a particular concern of the Frankfurt School<sup>43</sup> whose members were variously interested in the nexus of relationships between the individual, the family, and the wider society. Apart

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42 R. Johnson, 'Histories of Culture/theories of ideology : notes on an impasse', in Michelle Barrett, et al., (eds.), Ideology and Culture Production. London, Croom Helm, 1979, pp.49-77.

43 For an overview of the works of the Frankfurt School see The Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, Aspects of Sociology. Trans John Viertel. G.B., Heinemann. 1973, Robert Wuthnow, et al., Cultural Analysis. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1984, particularly Chapter 5, Martin Jay, The Dialectical Imagination : A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research. 1923-1950. Boston : Little, Brown and Co., 1973 and David Held, Introduction to Critical Thinking : Horkheimer to Habermas. Berkley. University of California Press, 1980.

from Habermas, who is concerned with the epistemological value of the therapeutic experience, the themes treated by the Frankfurt School are similar, although there are important differences in emphasis.

Generally, they applaud psychoanalysis for providing a mediation between the understanding of the individual and society. The contention was that Freudian categories led to an appreciation of the significance of the superstructure - consciousness, ideology and sexuality. According to Adorno, psychoanalysis explains - as Marxism cannot - regression in history, best exemplified by German fascism, but also by the infantile longings elicited by the culture industry.<sup>44</sup> However, the central theme in the Frankfurt School's use of psychoanalysis is the notion of sexual repression. Marcuse and others expand the Marxist critique of capitalist political economy with the Freudian critique of bourgeois libidinal economy. In Eros and Civilisation, Marcuse translates Freudian categories into a Marxist lexicon. Thus the reality principle becomes the performance principle and the parallel with Marx's surplus value is Freudian surplus repression. The critical value of psychoanalysis is added to historical materialism, wherein capitalism is producing individuals who are less able to resist external authority.

Habermas explored further this perceived inability to resist external authority and sought to explain it in terms of the expansion of the 'technocratic consciousness', wherein the dominant ideology worshipped at the totem pole of science, as technological solutions to social problems were posited on the basis of a specific form of reason, instrumental rationality. The advent of the 'experts', the 'helping professions', continued the alienation and domination process of the individual whilst simultaneously oppressing social relationships. The family was perceived to have been irretrievably damaged, left in its weakened state to depend on the 'expert'. Although Foucault's interpretation of psychoanalysis appears in a different register to that of Habermas, (given that he maintains that bourgeois culture does not repress sexuality, as through the spread of discourses on sex, including psychoanalysis, forms of sex practices are created), there is a

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See Theodor Adorno, 'On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression of Listening', in Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt (eds.) The Essential Frankfurt School Reader. New York, Urizen, 1978, pp.270-299.

shared concern, along with Jacques Donzelot, of the increasing interventions of medical practitioners, psychiatrists and social workers who attempted to normalise individuals through increasingly 'rationalised' means, by turning them into meaningful subjects and docile objects. The discursive practices of children's play were profoundly affected by what Donzelot terms the 'psy' complex (as shall be identified and analysed later in the thesis).

This thesis has been influenced by the work of Foucault in his analysis or examination of the relation between forms of rationality and forms of language/power/knowledge, that is of the relation between the emergence of particular forms of language/knowledge and the exercise of specific forms of power. Such a premise maintains that the significant 'objects' of investigation for historical materialism are arrangements in which the model of labour does not serve as the impetus of interpretation. The premise of technologies of power suggests that discourses and practices are intertwined in articulated formations having the domination of one group over another as their primary trait.<sup>45</sup>

If the notion of discourse in its most general sense is considered as the abstraction of any written or oral process of communication through which meaning is transmitted as 'the visible and describable praxis of what is called "thinking",<sup>46</sup> then Foucault's manner of dealing with discourse is discursive in that his intention is to reveal the historical conditions that make a particular mode of conceptualisation possible and seeks to uncover the discursive and institutional strategies that contribute to the formation of subjects. As it is the constitution of 'objective' systems of knowledge that institutes subjection, by outlining the circumstances attending the formation of a discourse, Foucault reveals the basically political role of discourse in the formation of meanings - the meanings necessary for the constitution of one's images of himself/herself.

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<sup>45</sup> For example, see Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish : The Birth of the Prison. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York : Pantheon, 1978. Originally published as Surveiller Et Punir : Naissance De La Prison. Paris, 1975.

<sup>46</sup> Timothy J. Reiss, The Discourse of Modernism. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1982, p.9. For a fuller discussion of "discourse" see also Reiss, pp.27-31.

The intention of Foucault's analysis of discourse is not to erect new boundaries delimiting human nature as his discourse is not aimed at human beings but at other discourses. Therefore an attempt is not made to discredit individuals or blame social classes or groups as these are but subjects - that is discursive constructs. In this regard, Foucault's approach to discourse can be considered similar to that of Jacques Lacan, for whom 'a signifier is that which represents a subject...not for another subject, but for another signifier'.<sup>47</sup> A signifier does not serve to link an individual to another individual or to the world but to their signifiers, the subject is therefore an effect of the realm of signifiers and the subject's 'reality' is provided by a field of discourses. One 'exists', then, as an element of discourse, yet one 'plays out' different subject positions and different power relations within multiple discursive positionings corresponding to multiple subjectivities.

According to Foucault, discourse, which has traditionally served to provide a history for a subject as well as subjects for history, has also functioned to maintain the illusion of a memory possessing the capacity to relive the past, to retrieve events from an ever present preteriteness. Society has always provided itself with documents to preserve the traces of its history. Such historical texts are understood to contain within their memorial depths the riches of ages gone by. Archaeology transforms documents into monuments, into tangible arrangements of perceptible structures, and analyses the actual configuration of the discourses that constitute an archive:

Instead of seeing, on the great mythical book of history, lines of words that translate in visible characters thoughts that were formed in some other time and place, we have in the density of discursive practices, systems that establish statements as events (with their own conditions and domain of appearance) and things (with their own possibility and field of use).<sup>48</sup>

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47 Jacques Lacan, 'Le Seminaire, Livre xi.' Paris : Seuil, 1973, pp.180-81, cited in Karlis Racevskis, Michel Foucault and the Subversion of Intellect. Cornell University Press, London, 1983, p.18.

48 Michel Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge. Trans. by Alan Sheridan. Tavistock, London, 1972. Originally published as L'Archaeologie Du Saviour. Gallimard, Paris. 1969, p.128.

'One must study therefore the economy of the discursive constellation to which (any discourse) belongs.'<sup>49</sup> Adapting the quotation from Foucault, this thesis recognises that the determinants of any discourse, in this case children's play, can be found as much in those surrounding discourses that bear upon it as in the internal logic or regularities of the discourse itself. The relationships between these different discourses can be relationships of dominance or even mutual contradiction (as evidenced by the contradiction of the increasing definitions of play as 'quite a serious business', while expressing a simultaneous concern for the loss of freedom and naturalness in children's play). Within the framework of emergent institutionalisation in nineteenth century Australia, a relationship can be invariably established as existing between the organisation of the pedagogy of an institution, such as the school, and the analyses of a domain of political knowledge within which discipline and control is formulated as a need. The emergence of 'compulsory' schooling in nineteenth century Australia was marked by just such relationships of dominance and conflict to other well-established discursive forms, as evident in the conditions of existence of contemporary social practices - such as the administration of 'Poor Relief'.

It was not simply as a means of socialisation or social control that institutions such as the school existed, but as a way of securing public morality and preventing crime, as a method for forming a population with good habits through the instrument of useful discursive principles in order to secure a moral foundation for governmental and religious authority.<sup>50</sup> The practices of schooling in this period began to exist specifically as a means for regulating the relations between social classes by forming an instrument which is able to modify a class 'culture', that is the very conditions which serve to define a class in its essential traits. Schools then became a set of techniques specifically adapted to class characteristics forming together with the other conditions of a 'class existence of a new

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49        *Ibid.*, p.66.

50        For a particularly useful discussion on the modes in which the institution of the school was an instrument of 'useful' discursive principles, see K. Jones, and K. Williamson, 'The Birth of the Schoolroom : A Study of the transformation of the discursive conditions of English popular education in the first half of the nineteenth century'. *Ideology and Consciousness*, 6, 1979, pp.59-110.

règime for training the characters of that class' juvenile members 'in the way they ought to go'. Critical to training children 'in the way they ought to go' was the reformulation of their play.

The most relevant argument, for this study, developed by Foucault, is that concerning the formation of a modern, disciplinary society. Foucault outlined that since the eighteenth century there had been a transformation of the mechanisms and modalities of power and object(s) to which power addresses itself. Henceforth, the aim of power was to incite, control and regulate forces, to render them productive, rather than to reduce, bend or destroy them.<sup>51</sup> This process of transformation takes place along an axis with two opposing yet complementary poles, that of the body and that of the population. The first to emerge as a terrain of control and intervention was that of the body as the 'repository' of forces - the body machine - to be controlled, trained, set-to-work, the possessor of powers to be increased, channelled and used. The body is to be rendered both docile and useful, so as to permit its integration into specific mechanisms of control - the disciplines. In Discipline and Punish, Foucault documented and analysed the genealogy of disciplinary régimes, of which the school, along with the college, the workshop, the barracks, and the asylum, is a striking example. The management and surveillance of the human body gives rise to certain techniques and mechanisms:

The body is moulded by a great many distinct régimes; it is broken down by the rhythms of work, rest, and holidays; it is poisoned by food or values, through eating habits or moral laws; it conducts resistances....<sup>52</sup>

The second mode of transformation is that of the population as a whole, in which the human body figures not as the target of disciplinary procedures but as the support of biological processes - the individual body becomes also the species body. The population, as the totality of biological individuals, becomes an object of knowledge, an object of intervention by oracles which 'take into account the processes of life and undertake to

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51 Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality. Volume 1. An Introduction. Trans. Robert Hurley. Allen Lane, London, 1979, p.179. Originally published as La Volonte De Saviour : Histoire De Le Sexualite. Vol.1.

52 Michel Foucault, Language, Counter-Memory, Practice : Selected Essays and Interviews. (ed.) D.F. Bouchard. Blackwell : Oxford 1977, p.153.

control and modify them'.<sup>53</sup> The biological transforms to the political, what Foucault terms the bio-politics of population, which together with the anatomo-politics of the human body comprises a technology of power. Foucault argues that power and knowledge are indissociable, in that 'there is no power relationship without the correlate constitution of a field of knowledge, not a knowledge which does not pre-empt and (at the same time) constitute power relationships'.<sup>54</sup> That is not to imply that the relationships between practices, understood as modalities of the exercise of power, and knowledge of the objects to which such practices are directed cannot exist in a different manner amongst specific institutions and in institutionalised discourses. For example, during the eighteenth century the concern with policing the population was a product of changes in the constitution of the labour force but more directly as a result of the great European demographic upswing. Population became a problem to be organised and disciplined, and simultaneously an object of surveillance, analysis, intervention and codification. Within this context the body took on a new and crucial importance - as the bearer of those qualities of health, sickness, strength and weakness, which were crucial to the future of the society as a whole. Hence the emergence of new forms of control which the prison, and the Panopticon as its particular ideal form, were representative; and the new importance assigned to the sexual domain. The biological features of the population became relevant factors for economic management and it became necessary to ensure not only their subjection but the constant increase of their utility. From this emerged the concern with childhood, with the family, with hygiene, and with sexuality.

Bentham's Panopticon is a concept that can be explored not just as the leading antecedent of the new technology of power that was instituted in the nineteenth century prison but as the fore-runner to the computerised monitoring of individuals in advanced capitalism.<sup>55</sup> For the purpose of this study, the Panopticon was important because it

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53 Foucault, Discipline and Punish. p.6.

54 Ibid.

55 Mark Poster, Foucault, Marxism and History. Mode of Production versus Mode of Information. Polity Press, Cambridge, 1984, on p.103, raises an extremely interesting point relating to the mechanisms of information processing as an extension of behaviour

introduced a method of 'normalising' individuals that could be applied to other situations. As Foucault wrote, 'All that is needed then is to place a supervisor in the central tower and to shut up in each cell a madman, a patient, a condemned man, a worker or a school boy.'<sup>56</sup> Capitalist society thus has available a means of control, a 'technology of power' that can be deployed at many locations.<sup>57</sup> As a consequence, Panopticon monitoring extends not simply to massed groups but to the isolated individual in his or her home, at play, in all the mundane activities of everyday life. Such a position has strong resonance with the reorganisation, and to some extent, annexation of children's play, and as such, forms a significant source of ideas for the analysis which follows in the main body of the thesis. It is perplexing then, that the ideology of children's play has not been well served by feminist writers. Feminist historiography has necessarily focused on women rather than children. Yet, just as the concepts 'children' and 'play' have been employed by many writers as two inseparable entities<sup>58</sup>, so, too, has the conceptual link between the construct 'woman' and 'child'. Therefore the ways in which the ideology of children's play functions, like that of the specific ideological areas of subordination of women in the domestic, work, psychology, and sexual spheres, has been considered 'traditionally' as part of a broader hegemonic pattern in advanced capitalist society.

Yet, gender politics are, in general, not analysable using the category of hegemony. When Marxists, particularly Western Marxists, discussed aspects of daily life in terms of the category of alienation they continually 'slipped back' to analysing modes of production. Examples were proffered to show that consumers were alienated in the market place through advertising, that students were alienated in the classroom through the system of

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monitoring. He suggests that the techniques of discipline no longer need rely on regulating bodies in space...that traces of behaviour are all that is needed - credit card activity, traffic tickets, telephone bills, library records, and so forth, have become a carceral apparatus in a new mode of discipline.

56 M. Foucault, Discipline and Punish, p.200.

57 See Jacques Donzelot. The Policing of families : Welfare versus the State. Trans. Robert Hurley. Pantheon : New York, 1979, first published as La Police des familles. Paris, 1978, for the development of an argument relating to the reorganisation of the family which has relevance to this study and will be referred to again later in the main text.

58 See in particular Pollock, Forgotten Children.



examinations, that women were alienated in the home through isolation, and so forth. In each case, however, it was assumed that the source of alienation was the workplace and that other forms of alienation were derivations from that source. Ultimately, the struggle in the workplace took priority and the specific forms of domination in everyday life were to be taken care of 'automatically' after the capitalist economy was overturned by the proletariat. That this has not happened in relation to women's position(s) in 'public' and 'domestic' domains in non-capitalist societies points to the existence of the organisation of a system that pre-dates (and co-exists with) capitalism - that of patriarchy.

While several decades or so have produced what can be appropriately referred to as a feminist social theory, which addresses itself to an analysis of the position of women, both in the 'private' and 'public' domains, within the nexus of relationships of a patriarchal ideological social system to modern capitalism, there has not been the same attention given, in feminist discourse, to the position and constructing of the signification of 'male' and 'female' children and their play within discursive practices. If, as feminists have cogently argued, there is no pre-given state 'subject', this raises the whole question of the ways in which ideologies of children's play, and its sub-cultural variations of race, class, gender, ethnicity and so on, are incorporated and signified within a given national culture. Observing/analysing 'society' as being constantly created through discursive practices allows one to 'reach' the power of those practices (and, ultimately, disrupt some of these).

There has, however, been a growing body of work analysing the inter-relations of discursive practices and the construction of 'the subject'. Perhaps the most widely disseminated of this genre has been Language, Gender and Childhood, whose editors stated intent was 'the way in which modern women and children have been historically constructed'.<sup>59</sup> The various essays entailed sought to explore 'the complex relations between social regulation, the circumscription of action and subjective experience in both

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59 Carolyn Steedman, Cathy Urwin and Valerie Walkerdine, Language, Gender and Childhood, History Workshop Series. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985, p.1.

past and present'.<sup>60</sup> This nexus of gender and language relations has, like the curate's egg, been 'good in parts'.

Along with the work of Dale Spender, and others, an emphasis on 'man made' language has confused and/or collapsed into an understanding of lexical items as the site of 'gender' production, rather than provided an analysis of the sites of language production and their attendant differential effects on 'men', 'women', 'boys' and 'girls'.<sup>61</sup> Too often, 'language' has been treated as an object, with an elision of its own discursive 'history'. 'Finding a voice' for women implies much more than the substitution of a neuter gender, it requires a critical understanding of the relationship between the development of gendered 'identity' and the different positions one takes up in language in interpellated relations.

In learning to manage inter-personal situations in accordance with what one is allowed, expected or desires to do (or be), the production of language is intricately in the production of culturally prescribed and proscribed 'aspects' of the dichotomies 'masculine'/'feminine'. The power to speak is a process of reproduction which does not have a unitary point of origin, nor is it simply context determined. The desire to speak needs to be analysed if one wishes to posit a theory of subjectivity, with its attendant motivations and tension. Changing the Subject : Psychology, Social Regulation and Subjectivity has been far more informed than most studies in utilising linguistic theory and psycho-analytical theory in exploring the notion of a 'subject-in-process'.<sup>62</sup>

Yet few writers in the field of 'language'/'gender'/'childhood' explore the fields of semiotics, of mythologemes and narratives, or of re-constructed memory; all of which directly impact upon (and are impacted upon, in turn) 'the subject-in process'. While Rosalind Coward and John Ellis signposted the field in Language and Materialism, there is little evidence of such scholarship in Australia.<sup>63</sup> Bronwyn Davies would appear to be the

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60 Ibid.

61 See Dale Spender, Man Made Language. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980.

62 Julian Henriques, et al., Changing the Subject : Psychology, Social Regulation and Subjectivity. London, Methuen, 1984.

63 Rosalind Coward and John Ellis. Language and Materialism. Developments in Semiology and the Theory of the Subject. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977.

major exception within contemporary studies of 'childhood' and 'gender'.<sup>64</sup> Within historiographical studies of 'children' the dialectic of the negotiation of meaning would appear to be, at best, marginalised in the discourse.

This thesis, then, proposes to analyse the ways in which the management, and particularly the sexual identity, of children's play (as well as its other sub-cultural variants) is reproduced in the interest of patriarchal relations as much as the reproduction of the labour necessary for capitalist relations, and how the discursive practices relating to children's play were (and are) the products of labour, of politics, of ideology, and of power. Because the everyday life experiences of children, in relation to their play, games, toys rhymes, songs, and so on, have been generally omitted from 'public' discourses, this thesis has turned to another mode in which a sense of the past is constructed in societies, through 'private' memory, and the methodology of oral history. Such an approach is problematic, however.

Oral history 'testimony' is profoundly influenced by discourses and experiences in the present. It is the standpoint from which oral accounts (and formal histories) are constructed. Memory is therefore itself a profoundly complicated construction and a very active process. In memory, past events, in their own complexity, are worked and reworked in the present. This poses the problematic in treating oral history witnesses as 'sources'. It is to treat them as a form of walking, talking documentation, the person as archive.<sup>65</sup> Feminist historians have always understood that history matters politically. Political domination involves historical definition. History - in particular popular memory - is at stake in the constant struggle for hegemony. The relation between history and politics, like the relation between the past and present, is therefore internal : it is

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64 Bronwyn Davies. Life in the Classroom and Playground : The Accounts of Primary School Children. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982; and Frogs and Snails and Feminist Tales. Preschool Children and Gender. Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1989.

65 For Australian debate on the use of oral history methodology see Patrick O'Farrell, 'Oral History : Facts and Fiction', in Quadrant, November, 1979, pp.49-53. Bill Thorpe, 'Further Verbals in the Oral History Debate', in Quadrant, July 1980, pp.54-58, and Louise Douglas and Peter Spearitt, 'Talking History : The Use of Oral Sources' in New History. (eds.) G. Osborne and W.F. Makers, Sydney : George Allen and Unwin, 1982, pp.59-68.

about the politics of history and the history of politics. Recognition by feminists has also been given to the domain of the subjective-affective relations between men and women and their children, based in the division of labour and relations of power, but critical in terms of how men, women and children 'see' themselves. Such a viewpoint can prevent a slippage into 'public'/'private', 'above'/'below' or 'interior'/'exterior' dichotomies.

Kerreen Reiger, has explored child-rearing 'attitudes' in a major study based in Preston, Victoria.<sup>66</sup> Traditional archival sources such as government reports, clinical records, newspapers and magazines, were utilised along with oral evidence, which was to 'provide the detail of the routines of women's daily existence, but also of their creative responses to the exigencies of material existence, their sense of themselves and their relationship with others'.<sup>67</sup>

This thesis owes much to Reiger's text, The Disenchantment of the Home, in that her 'utilisation' of the seemingly disparate strands of Foucauldian analysis of power/knowledge, the Frankfurterschule's concerns with 'everyday' cultural analysis, Marxist analyses of 'consciousness' and feminist social theory criticisms informed my own readings and critical praxis. Reiger's use of oral sources also signposted my own desire to pursue notions of how the self is re-constituted in memory. However, because the oral narratives were marginalised in Reiger's text, this aspect of how we come to know ourselves was not pursued.

While I recognise that 'memory' is not a dynamic in Reiger's thesis, it is problematic that this 'sense of the self' is elided in the assumption that constructions of domesticity are not negotiated, that a 'top down' approach exists, with 'experts' setting the agenda.

Rather than 'reading' the 'public' and 'private' source material relating to the everyday lives of children as dichotomous descriptive examples of bourgeois hegemony, the aim of this thesis is to focus on the interaction between the 'domestic sphere' and the

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<sup>66</sup> Kerreen Reiger, The Disenchantment of Home : Modernising the Australian Family 1880-1940. Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1985.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p.230.

'public world' with a view to identifying the makers and transmitters of child-rearing rules relating to play and explaining who or what required their views to be universalised. The use of an oral history 'method', despite its acknowledged ideological colouring and past-present problematic, is seen as one possible way to proceed towards an understanding of how the speaking subjects made sense of their world, how and why changes occurred in the social construction of children's play practices and to what extent children, and their parents, resisted the dominant discursive practices of play ideologies. Changes to play practices, in relation to age, gender, ethnicity, and country/city divisions, are central to the thesis' analysis of the construction of differing 'needs', and how and why these 'needs' were articulated.

Such 'needs', and 'desires', cannot be postulated without a brief signposting of the necessity for 'deconstructing' the oppressive dualisms employed in our language, which attempt to essentialise us all. Until we can admit both the 'fictionality' of what we assume to be 'real' and the 'reality' of our 'fictions' we will never understand the histories of our productions.

To speak of public/private or subject/object, real/representation or interior/exterior, and mind/body or male/female as unproblematic is to posit an idealist position of complementarity, of equivalence.<sup>68</sup> This untenable liberalist levelling of meaning implies that there is no opposition in the distinction of 'public'/'private' or in 'male' and 'female' ascriptions and inscriptions. It implies a reification of a choice between two positions. In this thesis, particularly within the dynamics of re-memorisation, one is constantly aware of the relational, of the entanglement of the 'private' with the 'public' and the intrication of the 'public' with the 'private'. To be reconciled to dichotomies as given is to deny the active construction and re-construction of these constructs, whose histories can be traced to the site of their re-production.

Notions of dichotomies deny that we have different speaking materialities with differential affects. It denies that our 'needs', our 'desires' and our 'beliefs' are grounded

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68 By enclosing 'public'/'private' et cetera in quotation marks I continually signify that such dualities are problematic.

in the texts of our experiences and within the 'body' whose experience it is.<sup>69</sup> Further, it is a denial of the discursive functions of our semiotic, psychological, metaphysical and material practices. To not acknowledge this is to continue to privilege the myth of a unified being and eliminates the specificity of difference - a difference within subject positionings, not a difference between. It is the differences within which must be attended to, even as they are suppressed or finessed, so that the utopian logic of the same is transcended. To subvert this allows us to posit not just what we are, but what we are not and to position ourselves according to a range of interests and abilities (which are not circumscribed by the possession of genitalia). To know oneself is to understand that the self is an historical product.

The study draws, then, from various socio-linguistic theories which are linked together by analyses of power and knowledge, knowledge and ideologies, ideology and culture, through the production of critical discourses. The function of such discourses is to interrupt the smooth passage of 'régimes of truth', to disrupt those forms of knowledge which have assumed a self-evident quality, and to engender a state of uncertainty in those responsible for servicing the network of power-knowledge relations, for example, 'the judge of normality', teachers, doctors, social workers, and other members of 'the helping professions'. At the heart of this analysis, then, is the activity of critique. As Foucault has observed:

Critique doesn't have to be the premise of a deduction which concludes: this then is what needs to be done. It should be an instrument for those who fight, those who resist and refuse what it is. Its use should be in process of conflict and confrontation, essay in refusal. It doesn't have to lay down the law for law. It isn't a stage in a programming. It is a challenge to what it is.<sup>70</sup>

It is in this sense of critique, which constitutes a common denominator among the work of Foucault, classical Marxism, the Frankfurt School, and feminist narrative theory, that the theoretical framework of the thesis is posited. The similarities exist only in that there is a shared commitment to critique, not in their actual praxis.

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69 This argument is developed in Chapter 7, below.

70 Michel Foucault, 'Questions of Method : An Interview with Michel Foucault', in Ideology and Consciousness. No.8, 1976, p.13.

From Foucault comes the concepts of a discourse analytic of power and knowledge; from classical Marxism the concepts of ideology, culture and hegemony; from the Frankfurt School the critique of social rationalisation and the dissemination of 'technical reason' by the emergent professional-managerial sector and, from feminist theory, with its long tradition of oral history 'methodology',<sup>71</sup> an analysis of gender, age and class within patriarchal and capitalist relations.

Interwoven and embedded within an analysis of these theoretical constructs is my belief that one can not define any socially institutionalised mode of speech and writing (discourse), with its attendant effects of power, without first understanding their textual underpinnings, the discursive practices through which people give expression to the ideologies by which they are governed. Every construct has its own 'history'.

However, while interest in an analysis of language and discourse is a recent one for Australian historians, European linguists have long posited the inter-relation of 'language' (discourse) and 'history'. In the 1920s and 1930s, Lucien Febre and Mark Bloch, brought 'economic and social history', formerly considered as no more than a subsidiary subject, to the forefront of history in their 'creation' of the French historical journal, originally titled the Annales d'histoire économique et sociale.<sup>72</sup> Not only did they inaugurate a new historical direction, that of culture, forms of consciousness, and ideology, they called for an alliance between 'history and linguistics'. This socio-historical concept of mentality (*Mentalité*) was outlined by Febre in subsequent journal articles under such titles as 'Les mots et les choses en histoire économique', which led to the establishment of a separate section of the journal entitled 'Words and Things' (*Les mots et les choses*).<sup>73</sup>

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71 See in particular, Tricia Davis, et al., 'The public face of feminism : early twentieth century writings on women's suffrage', in Making Histories : Studies in history-writing and politics. (eds.), Richard Johnson, et al., Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham, 1982, pp.302-324.

72 Between 1939 and 1945 the title changed several times. Since 1946 it has been published under the title Annales. Économies. Sociétés. Civilisations.

73 For a translation of many of Febre's articles, read Lucien Febre, A New Kind of History, Peter Burke (ed.), O.U.P., Oxford, 1973.

Febre's analysis of the history of words and concepts were to illuminate many fields of linguistic research.

The Annales' ushered in a period of interdisciplinary contact which had the disparate approaches of 'historical-comparative linguists' and 'structural linguistics' (following Ferdinand de Saussure) being published together.<sup>74</sup> The theoretical conjuncture which brought about this change is usually termed that of 'structuralism'. This term describes an extremely heterogenous and frequently changing spectrum of positions whose common ground, initially, was the rejection of post-war existentialist historicism (in which knowledge of history was understood as the self-consciousness of a particular epoch) and subjectivism, and the adoption of a positive attitude towards the findings of structural linguistics and the theory of signs. Almost all the influential 'structuralists', from Lévi-Strauss, Goldman and Barthes to Lacan and Bourdieu lectured at the Annales-dominated Écoles des Hautes Études in Paris. It was from the École des Hautes Études that Algirdas Greimas, recalling Marc Bloch's plea for an 'historical semantics', formulated a programme of linguistically-grounded historico-structural discourse analysis:

...Language is a global system of signs, which pervades a culture and gives it expression. It is not merely a repertoire of words which can be taken in isolation as particular witnesses to a history that otherwise unfolds in a region beyond language; it is rather itself, as a symbolic system, the site where history takes place. It forms an autonomous social space, which goes beyond individuals and imposes models of feelings and action upon them. Words, organised in structured ensembles - 'vocabularies' - are interactively defined and constitute an objective and necessary plane of language, in which the historian can discover structures of mentalities and models of collective sensibility (not 'characteristic' and 'typical' attitudes). This is the level on which social roles are distributed and social frameworks for models of feeling and mentality-norms arise. Saussurian linguistics, therefore, does not reflect back the historian's own image of history, but suggests certain methods together with a unified and coherent plan for describing cultural history.<sup>75</sup>

Influenced by this Annales' sponsored turn away from the traditional history of events, Roland Barthes wrote an article entitled 'Histoire et Littérature : à propos de

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74 See Chapter One below for a fuller discussion of linguistic theory and, in particular its inter-relation with the 'writing' of histories.

75 Algirdas Greimas, 'Histoire et linguistique', Annales d'histoire économique et sociale, vol. 13, 1958, pp.110-14. Translated in, Material Word, (eds.) Hilary Pilkington and Chris Turner, C.C.C.S., Birmingham, 1986.



Racine' which became widely read under its second title of 'Literature and History'.<sup>76</sup> Instead of discussing the 'author and his/her 'intentions'', Barthes proposed that one should study and ask questions about the social, mental and institutional conditions of possibility of literary texts. This would make visible 'literature' as an institutionalised effect of subjectivity.

What is fascinating about the previously cited works of Greimas and Barthes is that neither mentioned 'discourse', yet both writers anticipated aspects of discourse analysis. It was in the works of Michel Foucault, at the beginning of the 1960s, that the concept of 'discours' (discourse) achieved its special epistemological status. Institutionalised modes of speaking/writing (discourse) was to have its rules and mechanisms of function traced 'positively':

From the classic Age, Language is deployed within representation and in that duplication of itself which hollows itself out. Henceforth, the primary Text is effaced, and with it, the entire inexhaustible foundation of the words whose mute being was inscribed in things: all that remains is representation, unfolding in the verbal signs that manifest it, and hence becoming discourse... one no longer attempts to uncover the great enigmatic statement that lies hidden beneath its (discourse's) signs; one asks how it functions; what representation it designates, what elements it cuts out and removes, how it analyses and composes, what play of substitutions enables it to accomplish its role of representation. Commentary has yielded to criticism.<sup>77</sup>

This new form of history-of-knowledge had a great deal in common with the attempts of Febre, Bloch and many Annales authors to produce a history of conscious and, significantly, unconscious forms of thought that was not merely a history of ideas.<sup>78</sup> Foucault's discourse approach, Lacan's works on the structure of the unconscious, and

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76 Roland Barthes, 'Histoire et Littérature : à propos de Racine', *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale*, vol. 15, 1960, pp.524-337. Republished under the title, 'Literature and History', in Barthes, On Racine. Trans R. Howard. Hill and Wang, New York, 1977.

77 Michel Foucault, The Order of Things. An Archaeology of the Human Sciences. Tavistock, London, 1970, pp.79-80; also the introduction to his earlier work, The Birth of the Clinic, and a later work, The Archaeology of Knowledge.

78 The Order of Things, published in French as Les Mots et les Choses, is evocative of the Annales publication of Lucien Febre's 'Les mots et les choses en histoire économique', *ibid.*, and the separate section of the Annales journal, to which I have previously referred, 'Les Mots et Les Choses'. Foucault, in the introduction of Archaeology of Knowledge, explicitly connected it to the 'nouvelle histoire'.

Althusser's work on the materiality of the ideological were read (published) at similar times and can be postulated as supplementing each other.<sup>79</sup> Their major contribution, among others, was that it provided a theoretical framework for a non-subjective discourse-oriented reading of texts. According to writers such as Régine Robin, in terms of history, it provided the crucial impulse that was needed to provoke reflection on the existing elements of historical linguistic analysis and to establish it as a new problematic, that is as discourse analysis.<sup>80</sup>

While discourse analysis of the 1960s and 1970s was basically used to 'prove' what historical knowledge had already obtained by other methods, the 1980s 'ushered' in a practice of discourse analysis which is frequently described, in a general way, by Robin and others, as 'archive-reading'. Its aim was to consider discourses not only in terms of the external circumstances in which they arise but sought to trace contexts and discursive strategies in the material itself by examining the developments of themes. It is from this postulation of the need to develop 'themes' that the thesis seeks to analyse 'themes' of childhood culture, such as, the discourse of 'childhood', of 'play' of 'games' and so forth. In doing so, it adopts ideas and questions that have been developed in historical text pragmatics and in ethnomethodology.<sup>81</sup> In this thesis, it is contended that language is more than a

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79 Jacques Lacan, Écrits, Paris, 1966. A partial English translation, by A. Sheridan, is contained in Écrits : A Selection. Tavistock, London, 1977; Louis Althusser, 'Freud and Lacan' in Lenin and Philosophy and other essays. Trans. Ben Brewster, NLB, London, 1971, pp.177-202; For Marx. Trans. Ben Brewster, Allen Lane, London, 1969 and Reading Capital, trans Ben Brewster, NLB, London, 1970. (Post May 1968, these 'alliances' of theory disintegrated.)

80 It is regrettable that much of the prodigious works of Régine Robin, the first specialist historian to adopt discourse analysis (as opposed to specialist linguists with historical interests), remain untranslated from their original French publications. Histoire et Linguistique, Paris, 1973 introduced detailed analyses of various 'techniques' of discourse analysis, from lexicometry, lexicology (the study of individual words and their usage) and sémanalse (the analysis of semantic units in sentences, after Greimas), to 'automatic discourse analysis' (after Pêcheux, and discussed below, in Chapter One). A brief overview of her work is contained in Sociocriticism, no.2, 1985, pp.151-63.

81 Historical text pragmatics refers to an application of speech acts theory and has been influential in literary criticism. Texts are interpreted as speech acts and are analysed according to their practical function. This is not to suggest that the materiality of discourse, as an 'entity' to be analysed in itself, is neglected. For example, children's games can be analysed as historical pragmatic texts and discursive 'elements' (The synchronic and diachronic 'levels' are explained below, in Chapter One.)

mere passive vehicle for conveying meanings, that its discursive structure itself plays a large part in signifying 'meaning', and that paying close attention to forms of language within discursive practices is a central task for historians.

The thesis is divided into four major sections encompassing eight chapters. The motif of 'interiors', 'exteriors', 'adult designated sites of experience' and 'changing constructions of childhood play' is utilised not as an unproblematic, universal, linear sequence of events pertaining to all children but as a way of focusing on the discursive practices within which all children are intricately. The chapters chart the attempts to locate children on topographical grids according to age, gender, class, religion and ethnicity constructs and within country and city divisions, amidst changing modes of production and re-production. Threaded throughout the thesis are oral narratives of men and women whose childhoods were constructed during this 'period'.

A variety of sources are drawn on, from both 'public' and 'private' discourse. Although Appendix 1 contains a full description of the technicalities of methodologies and sources this thesis utilises, a special note is required about the contributions of thirty South Australians who shared memories of their childhood with me. These men and women are not being represented as the 'authentic voice' of South Australian children in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Nor should they be. Along with narratives from the S.A. Speaks Oral History Project and the Arts Council of South Australia's Fun 'n' Games project, these oral discourses are 'read' as constructions of subjectivity, as semiotic, and psychic and symbolic positionings.<sup>82</sup> As the underlying premise of the thesis is that an individual's way of 'knowing' the world is an artefact of the 'period' in which he or she lives and, as such, it is not eternal, oral narrative illuminates the framework of perception that operates at any given time. What the thesis seeks to trace and demonstrate, then, is that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in South Australia the

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S.A. Speaks. Oral History Project for the Sesquicentenary of South Australia. Mortlock Library of South Australiana, Fun 'n' Games. Arts Council of South Australia Project, Henley Beach, S.A. To distinguish the above from my oral history interviews, referred to as OHI, all citations from my transcripts from my recorded interviews are placed in bold type in the body of the thesis.

material, psychical and semiotic life of children, and in particular their play practices, underwent major changes. These changes were frequently contradictory and were implicated in massive governmental incursions into the sphere of familial and personal relationships.

In Section One, Chapter One explores the notions of 'identity', of how the self is constructed and re-constructed, and details, at some length, the involvement of the interviewees in this thesis. The dynamic of re-constructed memory is introduced in order to posit the notion of different speaking materialities and their attendant different discursive positionings. It is argued that there are multiple selves and multiple histories. The inter-relations of language, knowledge, power and 'the subject' are sketched and the myth of a unitary being is posited.

Chapter Two focuses closely on the attempts to widen the 'interiors' of 'private' experience. The disjunctions between dichotomised 'public' and 'private' discourses and discursive practices are explored in relation to the construction of 'desires' - the 'desire' to re-order familialism, with its consequent changing network of power operations, and the positing of 'the mother' as a 'privileged agent' of these changes. This chapter argues that as 'the mother' came increasingly under the scopic 'normalising' gaze, so, too, did the cultural construct, 'the child'. The concept of the social, as posited by Donzelot, is examined as a mode of increasing hybridisation of 'public' and 'private' spheres.

In Section Two, Chapter Three examines specific 'movements', such as The Street Children's Campaign, to superintend children's movements through time and space and to delineate a demarcation amongst the realms of 'work', 'play' and 'school'. A demarcation along age lines was also intricately within dualities of 'younger'/'older'. The inauguration of public playgrounds is posited in this thesis as a technology of moral supervision within which children could come to see themselves according to new gendered social norms. 'Public' records are cited to depict the increasing penetration of governmental technologies of power into the 'social body'.

Chapter Four explores the frequently-contradictory rites and rituals of 'the community', within which children are positioned. The 'playing out' and 'practising' of gendered subject positionings is analysed, as is the constant tension involved in the

antithetical notions of 'supervised freedom'. The inter-relations of 'child' to 'child' are of particular import for this chapter.

In Section Three, Chapter Five examines how the 'work' and the 'play' of 'the child' came to be re-constructed. The introduction of compulsory schooling is posited as introducing massive changes on the construction of 'childhood'. 'The school' is predicated as a specially constructed age-graded and gendered institution which set-up norms of cleanliness, hygiene, efficiency and discipline, amongst many others. Within the all-seeing gaze of the teachers, children were to be sifted, sorted and classified, their bodies were to be redistributed along a normative scale. 'Play' as a pedagogic device was to form a corner-stone of educating 'according to nature'. As such, the environment of 'play', the 'real work' of 'the child', could be watched, monitored and transformed - along with the 'performers'.

Chapter Six explores the articulation of conjoined moral superintendence and governmental normalising practices on the specially designed 'space' of the school playground. It is within this 'uncovered schoolroom' that the 'real life' of the child and their 'true characters' was posited as being superintended. This chapter traces the attempts to 'use' the 'transformation' of children's play practices to re-shape the cultural physiognomies of whole populations through the forms in which individuals were to internalise 'social' norms as conscience and sensibility.

In Section Four, the focus changes to that of notions of individual 'reality'. In Chapter Seven, how one comes to be a 'girl' or a 'boy' is examined within notions of dualistic biologism and essentialism. The ascription and the inscription of bodies as 'masculine' or 'feminine' is explored and the Derridian notion of 'différance' is posited as one mode of coming to understand the ways in which individuals can 'take-up' a range of positionings which are not dependent on genitalia. The works of Lacan, Freud and Derrida are specifically focused upon to decentre the notion of a unified, rational being. The workings of desire, in relation to psychical, symbolic and material functioning, is also explored as an historical production. I posit that every practice is a production.

In Chapter Eight, the notion of 'self-knowledge', of ethos, is posited as a powerful locus for the 'stories', that is, the narratives and myths we live by. The tensions between

ethos and pathos are 'lived out' daily. Through the narratives of re-constructed memory I argue that the opaqueness of past 'childhoods' can be illuminated in the present tellings of individuals. What is revealed is the hopes, beliefs and desires of personal mythology. The psychical, semiotic, material and symbolic positionings of individuals, as re-constructed from the past, are also seen to be a continuing historical force in the present. As such, this chapter argues for the need for historians to trace the dynamics of re-memorised narratives in future theorising of 'subjectivity', whether it encompasses the world of 'childhood' or not. Cultural practices cannot be 'probed' without such an understanding of the inter-relation of myth and memory.

This thesis concludes that the play practices of children, the dominant leit-motif of 'children's culture', did undergo massive transformation by the nineteen thirties. But the thesis posits that such changes were not calibrated on a unified or linear grid. Central to its transformation was the concept of changing constructions of class, gender and age relations. The arguments shaping and surrounding these changes have varied enormously over time. Underpinning changing play practices were, amongst others, notions of juvenile 'crime', of idleness on the streets and of the 'need' to re-locate children in 'schools' where moral superintendence would occur 'naturally'. The thesis posits that power relations always/already interpenetrate human subjectivity but this does not preclude the possibility of change.

**SECTION ONE : WIDENING 'INTERIORS'**



## CHAPTER ONE : THE MAKING OF IDENTITY

It's a good thing to think about the child as long as you remember that the child doesn't exist. Only children exist. Every time we lump them together we lose something.... It is not just a matter of the enormous differences between individuals. Every child is in a different state of being or becoming.<sup>1</sup>

June Factor wrote that 'Childhood is perhaps the last significant area of neglect in Australian historiography'.<sup>2</sup> Amidst a plethora of psychological studies on child development and distinct from the recent interest of social historians regarding children in the institutions - such as the family, school, workplace and church - the daily rites and rituals of the child have been largely left to oral historians to record.<sup>3</sup> As Stephen Murray Smith has suggested, childhood is the one historical experience everyone has been through, yet the one we know least about.

The changing constructions of 'childhood' have necessarily obfuscated 'the child' and highlighted 'children'. Although there has been widespread currency, since Ariès' Centuries of Childhood, of the notion of immense variation in the ideology and experience of childhood, it has been on the broad brush stroke of the common context of childhood that historians have focused. While acknowledging that even within the same family, a girl and a boy, or a youngest and an eldest, would not have the same childhood, nor would their neighbours' children of different religious beliefs or different ethnic identity, such factors of difference do not always constitute the central focus of study. Linguistically, the noun 'child' has an agreed opposite reference to the noun 'adult' in commonsense usage. Thus, in all societies there is an acceptance that a child differs in certain ways to an adult. Yet, even within a society, there is disagreement as to the meaning of 'a child', let alone what constitutes 'childhood'. What it means to be a child in contemporary times

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<sup>1</sup> M. Mead, Remarks at the symposium of 'Children, Nature and the Urban Environment', Washington, March 1975. C. Ward, The Child in the City. Pantheon Books. N.Y. 1978. Forward.

<sup>2</sup> J. Factor, Captain Cook Chased a Chook. Children's Folklore in Australia. Penguin Books. 1983. p.xiii.

<sup>3</sup> With the exception of Factor's work, and the detail of child life included in the 1888 and 1938 volumes of Australia in the bicentenary history of Australia - Australians : An Historical Library. Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, Broadway, N.S.W. 1987.



is as difficult and problematic to answer as what constitutes childhood for a child in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in South Australia.

Contemporary Australian Commonwealth law designates 'childhood' as a state of dependency that ceases when a child attains the age of eighteen. Only then can a person assume total responsibility for personal matters, such as marriage, voting in elections, signing contracts *et cetera*. However, State laws in Australia vary and the term 'childhood' is used in different, and not always, synonymous ways. In South Australia one can leave school at fifteen years of age, be bound by the Community Welfare Services Act until the age of fifteen years, obtain unemployment benefits at sixteen years of age, drive a car when aged sixteen years, yet not be tried in an adult court of law until attaining seventeen years of age.

In 1881 the Destitute Persons Act, in South Australia, defined a 'child' as a boy under sixteen and a girl under eighteen years of age. In the 1894 Factories Act, both boys and girls under the age of thirteen years were designated 'children'. Not having reached physical maturity and being dependent on adults appeared to be the significant late nineteenth century 'marker' of childhood. By 1915 the new construct - 'school-child' had become the dominant signifier of 'childhood'. With its conditions of fully compulsory schooldays, the Education Act of 1915 located all non-Aboriginal children in an extended period of institutionalised dependency between the age of six years and fourteen years. Casual or full-time labour by 'children' of those age groups was specifically banned.

That cultural constructs of childhood as 'dependency' vary from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries is obvious. The length of dependency on parents, the lengthening transition from school to work, and the earlier onset of puberty are only some of the ways the late twentieth century child differs from the late nineteenth century child. Yet, inherent in this perspective is the centrality of adult-designated definitions of childhood, be it legal, social or biological. Rarely is childhood, that is, what it means to be a child, investigated as a cultural phenomenon in its own terms.

'Childhood' as an object of concern is like an ever-varying cloud and historians are like people seeing faces in it. One historian may concentrate on the upper margins of

the cloud and define the contours of a nose and lip, hence the other portions of the cloud become totally oriented in respect to these. Another historian focuses on the lower segment, perceiving an ear, a nose, a chin, and simultaneously the cloud takes on the aspect of Zeus! For each perceiver/reader of 'childhood', be it an historian, folklorist, anthropologist, psychologist, linguist, or policy maker every sector of the cloud has a different function, name and value - fixed by his or her initial bias of perception.

'Childhood' as subjectivity is akin to perceiving faces in a cloud, too. Myths, stories, jokes, play and self-images are 'recovered' and reconstructed along opaque margins through a filtered nexus affected by the experiential world in which it is embedded. The ideas and leitmotifs feeding into everyday experience colour and shape the inner telos of 'childhood'. 'Objectivity' and 'subjectivity' are not then to be treated in this study of children as polarities, nor as 'dominant' object versus 'passive' subject. My central concern is to investigate how the play of children shaped their gendered identity amidst changing adult constructions of their world. Although I have isolated childhood play as an area of study, what follows is an exploration of a variety of sources which highlight the overlapping and contrasting features and patterns of South Australian 'childhood' in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The interweaving of different kinds of 'evidence' in this thesis is a deliberate attempt to turn their varying bias or emphasis to advantage, using them to build a wider understanding of what it meant/means to be 'a child' who experienced life during these 'decades' of family and childhood remoulding. Generally, historians' accounts of childhood have reflected an acceptance that their task is one of presenting a form of symbiosis between past and present - that they are not, in fact, co-creators of individual pasts. In contrast, oral historians have celebrated the interpretative aspects of history, highlighting their interaction with their interviewees. That these different perspectives have elicited much debate is not surprising - the historian as an external 'omniscient narrator' versus the mythic transference aspects of the historical situation and the transference analysis of the moments of storytelling.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See A. Portelli, 'The Peculiarities of Oral History', History Workshop Journal, 12, Autumn, 1981, pp.96-107; K. Figlio, 'Oral History and the Unconscious', History Workshop Journal, 26, Autumn 1988, pp.120-132.

While acknowledging that oral sources represent a different register to that of other sources, there are more similarities than differences. 'Scholarly research' is neither emotion free nor wholly tangible in its quest for 'truth' about the 'object' under study. One can argue that all historical documents are records of intersubjectivity whereby the text is produced through the imaginary relations of the historian to others, which in turn, structures the meaning of the document. Further, the version of the document appearing in a history is articulated and produced by the historian's mode of reading. If one supports such an argument then it strongly posits the historian as complicit in the production of all documents - whether it be parliamentary papers, letters, school punishment books or handbooks of teachers' regulations.<sup>5</sup> Oral testimony does not hide the fact that the interview is a collaborative endeavour in making sense of a life-history. It is the site where two (or more) subjectivities meet. Rememoration is possible only on the basis of empathy, according to Passerini, who argues that empathy develops and has its own story in the course of the social relationship which is the interview.<sup>6</sup>

The thirty individuals whom I interviewed form the basis of this thesis. The world they have conferred ontic meanings upon and their inter-subjectivity with other people and other sites is largely the subject of this study. But it is precisely the subject of inquiry and not the object. Children are rarely treated by historians as individual subjects, rather as objects of the study. Collective representation tends to become reified and the individual, as Margaret Mead highlighted, becomes elided. I remain aware that relying on oral sources is bedevilled by the same prejudices and bias inherent in relying on other source material. However, I would argue that undertaking to select 'subjects' for oral interview, setting an interview schedule, transcribing individual's

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<sup>5</sup> Foucault stated, 'The document is not the fortunate tool of a history that is primarily and fundamentally memory; history is one way in which society recognizes and develops a mass documentation with which it is inextricably linked'. M. Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge. London, Tavistock, 1972, p.7.

<sup>6</sup> L. Passerini, 'Memory'. Resume of the final session of the International Conference on Oral History. Aix-en-Provence, 26th September, 1982. History Workshop Journal, 15, Autumn, 1983. p.195.

narrative, obtaining 'authorisation' of usage of the transcription, and then offering an 'analysis' necessarily elides or blurs the division between 'subject'/subjectivity and 'object'/objectivity. What is confronted through the medium of oral 'testament' is the filtering of the angles and perceptions of the faces in the clouds; the shifts between 'fantasy' and 'reality', the movement towards consciousness of being, the movement towards cognizance of the relationship between the individual and the collective. As such, I have utilised the oral testimonies as cultural artefacts which are interpreted by reading the substructure of the text, that is, the substructural meaning of its own language.

Because there are so few written records which contain the thoughts and descriptions of childhood by the 'participants' themselves, whether it be about their school days, their family or their past-times, I initially undertook a large number of interviews to 'fill-in' this perceived gap. I also entertained notions of comparing the testimonies to the 'official' documentation where actual children's voices are never heard. The problematics, however, became all too apparent very quickly. Such a reading is essentially static and disregards the reconstruction that occurs within memory. From a problematic, regarding 'authenticating' evidence, the challenge became one of potential, of how to read the disjunctions, the omissions and the silences, and how to represent the conscious (and unconscious) shaping of memory in its symbolic, rather than literal, register.

### The Subjects.<sup>7</sup>

Interviewees were initially located in the seaside suburb of Glenelg where a large percentage of elderly people reside. Many people from rural areas retire to 'the Bay' so a broad section of South Australia was on offer. Others were located through a network of acquaintances and through relatives of students I was teaching at University. Colleagues were also instrumental in making additional contacts. Absolutely no claim is made to

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Refer to Appendices for full bibliographic details of interviewees, copy of initial letter of contact, interviews' schedule, dates of interviews, length of interviews, transcription sample, copy of letter of permission of use and general comments pertaining to methodology and interview details. A fuller discussion of the term 'subject' follows in this chapter.

representativeness in this sample, rather the opposite. However, the experiences of the people interviewed encompass wide variations, albeit operating within some common contexts.

All but two of the interviewees were born in South Australia. Thelma Williams (née Johnson) was born in Perth and arrived in Adelaide at the age of two years. Elsie Wheaton (née Pullen) was born in England and came to South Australia aged fifteen months. Twelve males and eighteen females were interviewed, the discrepancy best represented by the longevity of females. Twelve were born in the country and spent their childhood there, eleven were born in the city of Adelaide and 'grew up' in its environs, while five spent time in both country areas and the city. The remaining two interviewees born outside of South Australia, were city residents. The number interviewed who were born prior to Federation was seven, of whom three were males and four females. Those interviewed who were born prior to World War One numbered eighteen, eleven females and seven males. Those born after 1914 and up to 1928, the cut-off point for my interviews, number five, of whom three are female and two male.<sup>8</sup>

Fifteen of the interviewees listed themselves as Protestant, or more specifically, two as Lutheran, seven as Methodist, one as Presbyterian, one as Congregationalist, one as Church of Christ and three as Church of England; thirteen interviewees were Catholic, and two interviewees were 'brought up' as members of the Salvation Army. All but two of the respondents were of Anglo-Celtic origin, the exceptions belonging to the German Community. The omission of Nunga interviewees is a deliberate one. The interplay between white interviewer and Nunga interviewee is problematic and, with the emergence of Aboriginal communities documenting, in both oral and written forms, their cultural experiences, adapting the historical methods of collective biography, the limitations of such contacts are obvious when this interviewer would have operated from

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As my study encompasses the 'period' to 1939 (the declaration of World War Two was to 'usher in' its own particular changes), it was necessary to restrict interviews to those born in the 1920's who could comment on their experiences of the 1930's and were not too young to remember.

a base of minimal cultural understanding.<sup>9</sup>

All of the interviewees were 'schooled' in South Australia. Their schooling encompassed a range of urban and rural State schools, urban and rural Catholic schools, including boarding schools, rural German schools, private schools and urban Anglican day and boarding schools. One of the interviewees was initially taught by a governess and four of the interviewees attended both State and Catholic schools, reflecting the availability of Catholic Schools in some rural areas.<sup>10</sup> The length of schooling varied, as did the number of schools attended, and was dependent upon a number of factors. Of the Pre-Federationists, Llewellyn Fowler (born 1893) attended four State urban schools, from the age of four years, Plympton, Glenelg, Edwardstown and a return to Plympton. His schooling was punctuated by periods of absence obtaining necessary paid employment and he left, aged thirteen years, in Fifth Class, when legally able to do so, and took on a variety of labouring jobs. Molly (Mary) Dutton (born 1896) was educated by a Governess at her parents' property in the South-East of South Australia until she lived with her grandmother at 'Ferndale' on the Beaumont Common and attended the Wilderness School, run by the Misses Brown, at the age of eight years. She then spent three years at St. David's Anglican Church Day School, at Beaumont, followed by a brief spell at the Stirling East State School, while her parents lived there. Three years at St. Michael's Anglican Day School at Mitcham was a precursor to boarding for five years at 'Yoothamurra', a private girls' day and boarding school on the sea front at Glenelg. (The predecessor to Woodlands C.E.G.G.S.). Molly left school at the age of seventeen years and began a private kindergarten. Paddy (Clifton John) Baker (born 1897) attended the one school, Wolsley State School, a one teacher school in the South-East of South Australia, from the age of four years. After failing the sixth grade examination, Paddy left school at thirteen and took a labouring job on a farm, paying ten shillings a week.

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<sup>9</sup> This is not meant to negate the valuable contribution of white researchers such as Graeme Jenkin's work on the Ngarrindjerri; rather, it supports the current work of people like Doreen Kartinyery, a family historian of the Ngarrindjerri tribe whose narratives are featured in the South Australian Museum's 'The Dreamtime'.

<sup>10</sup> Refer to Appendix A regarding the type of School and years attended by Interviewees.

Kathleen McLean (née Greenham) (born 1898) began her schooling aged five years at Wellington Road (now Portrush Road) State School. At the age of nine years she moved to Forestville and attended the Goodwood State School. At nearly thirteen years of age Kathleen attended Unley High School and left at the age of sixteen years for Muirden College. When the First World War began, Kathleen left to take an office job.

Elizabeth Noonan (née Slattery) (born 1900) attended Hornsdale State School (in the Mid-north of South Australia) from the age of six years, and then, with her elder sister Margaret, attended the Sisters of St. Joseph Convent at Caltowie as a weekly boarder, from the age of nine years. At the age of twelve years she contracted diphtheria and paralysis and never returned to school.

Francis (Frank) Noonan (born 1901) attended the Sisters of St. Joseph Convent School in Jamestown (Mid-North of South Australia) from the age of seven years. His mother, a former governess with an extensive education herself, taught all of her six children to read, write and play the piano prior to their school enrolment. Frank completed his education as a boarder at Christian Brothers College, Wakefield Street, Adelaide, which he attended in 1916 and for the first six months of 1917. He left at the age of fifteen years and nine months believing that he was needed to help on his parents farm (and being too young to enlist in the Great War).

Eileen O'Loughlin (born 1901) was first taught by her mother, a former governess, at Parakee (in the Mallee area of South Australia) where there was no school. At the age of eight her family moved to Adelaide and she enrolled at Cabra Dominican Convent, at Cumberland Park, as a day pupil. Eighteen months later her parents moved her and her brothers to the St. Joseph's School at Mitcham. Her father's dissatisfaction with the 'elitist' division between the primary and the 'high' school children was given as the reason for the move. (Although Eileen was in the higher fee paying section, Mr. O'Loughlin apparently believed all the children should mix). At the age of eleven years her family moved back to the country and Eileen attended Butler's Bridge Public School, a one teacher school, leaving in Fifth Class at the age of thirteen.

That age, gender, religion, ethnicity, class and geographical location shape individual childhoods is glimpsed in just this brief litany of school experiences. This

thesis, however, proposes that for all of the interviewees, as for all adults, their childhood has its own particular form of validity and it is in this sense that it is analysed.

### The Interviews:

All but three of the interviews was held in the interviewee's home.<sup>11</sup> A preliminary visit was used to familiarise the interviewees with the scope of the two interviews to be conducted, arrange the necessary organisation of where to tape record, and ensure that the interviewees were familiar with the purpose of the interviews, and, more importantly, of what use they were to be put. Each interviewee received a copy of an outline of my thesis proposal, which reinforced the content of the initial contact telephone call, and a conditions of use form for the transcripts was discussed and left for their perusal.<sup>12</sup> Interviewees were then asked if they wished to participate.<sup>13</sup> The major area of concern was confidentiality - not of their own names being used but names of teachers or family and kin members of whom their memories were unpleasant. It was stressed that all interviewees could place restrictions on the usage and that this would be respected by me.

The amount of time involved in sorting out these preliminary aspects of concern was to prove invaluable as it minimised the power dynamic between interviewer and interviewee and rendered the interviews less formal. It also meant that the transcript of the interviews was accepted with eagerness and enjoyment and that corrections were usually restricted to spellings of place names or family members et cetera.<sup>14</sup> Only three interviewees placed restrictions on the text and in all cases this referred to certain

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<sup>11</sup> Llewellyn Fowler was interviewed in his unit at Milparra Nursing Home, Rostrevor; Kathleen McLean was interviewed in her independent accommodation at the Masonic Village, Somerton; and Veronica Sladdin in her unit at Austral Nursing Home, Morphettville.

<sup>12</sup> Refer to Appendix A for copies of these forms.

<sup>13</sup> Of thirty five initial telephone calls only four persons declined a preliminary interview. At the end of the preliminary interview all individuals consented to be involved.

<sup>14</sup> Although notation of the spelling of place names, geographical features and family names was made during the interviews inaccuracies occurred in some transcripts.



individuals' names being used. No restriction was placed on the content, nor on their own names being used, by any of the interviewees after receiving their transcript.

The questions of anonymity of interviewees is of central concern to oral historians. While I was prepared to accede to such a demand for anonymity, if it was forthcoming, I believe that the interpretative process at play in the interview is best served when the interviewer is not seen to be 'ventriloquising' the discourse of others. The intersubjectivity of the discourse that arises at the interview is made possible only on the basis of empathy and this can only be realised when the interviewer makes her intentions explicit prior to the interview process rather than producing them at the end. If this explicitness occurs initially, the interviewees do not see the need to cloak their narratives with anonymity.

Thus, I spent a great deal of time in this preliminary interview talking about how the individual narrative was to be utilised within the thesis and how such individual narrative differs from other discourses. Many individuals expressed surprise and pleasure that 'ordinary' people's stories had a place in a University thesis. During the preliminary interview a personal data form was filled out by the interviewee.<sup>15</sup> The opportunity was taken to ask about family photograph albums, important familial artefacts, such as birthday books, autograph books, school records/reports, published family histories and so on. As focus material for the first interview this proved to be most beneficial. Permission to copy and/or read certain articles was also gained. In some cases, arrangements were made to photograph such items as an 1899 Christening Gown and a 1914 woodwork project.

The first interview was scheduled within a week of the preliminary interview and, with the exception of one, averaged two to three hours.<sup>16</sup> While a detailed interview schedule had been prepared for both interviews, I utilised an interview checklist during

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<sup>15</sup> Refer to Appendix A for a copy of the Personal Data Form. This was to prove invaluable for collating statistical data.

<sup>16</sup> One interviewee, Mr. Bill Burns, decided mid-interview that he would rather not talk about religious differences on tape. I decided not to proceed with a second interview. Mr. Llewellyn Fowler's interviews were recorded in one hour blocks, due to his fragile health. He died before interviews were completed.

the actual tapings.<sup>17</sup> This minimised the distraction of frequent turning of pages and, more importantly, the desire to follow a set sequence of questions which disallowed flexibility. Most interviewees responded well to a seemingly unfocused interview. The first interview focused on parental relationships, kith and kin, the houses lived in, domestic rituals, clothing, food, health, festivities, religious observances, parental political observances and family pastimes. The second interview focused on school routines and activities, playground activities, time spent out of school, games, hobbies and collections, special activities, such as holidays, and friendship networks. This interview had a second section which focused on the interviewees as parents and elicited information about their childrearing practices, their children's leisure and play activities, and their beliefs about childhood. These interviews averaged two to three hours also. One sample interview transcripts is included in Appendix A. I regret that space does not allow for an inclusion of all transcripts. Appendix A does, however, contain a brief summary of each interview and the interviewer's comments.

### The Analysis:

How to represent the enormous qualitative information amassed from their interviews is problematic. As Roland Barthes indicates:

...historical discourse does not follow reality, it only signifies it; it asserts at every moment: this happened, but the meaning conveyed is only that someone is making that assertion.<sup>18</sup>

Every discourse, far from being a reflection of the 'object' which it is describing, utilises certain forms of representation which do not necessarily need a relationship of resemblance to the object described. Linguistic artifice employs techniques of representation; techniques which are subject to these rules of representation and not to the nature of 'reality'. As Jürgen Habermas puts it:

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<sup>17</sup> Refer to Appendix A for both Interview schedules and interview checklists.

<sup>18</sup> R. Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', in S. Sears, and G.W. Lord, (eds), The Discontinuous Universe. New York. Basic Books. 1972. P.7.

No matter how much a linguistic expression may be rooted in a situation and reveal its specific character, there always remains a gap between this expression and what is meant by it in the context of individual life relations. This gap can only be closed by interpretation.<sup>19</sup>

The interviews highlight that language is above all a social instrument which opens up the text and shows it to be another link, among many, to the multiplicity of culture itself. Thus a multiplicity of reasons must be acknowledged. I make no claim for establishing the validity of any particular reading; the ground for establishing validity is internal consistency of the text. To elaborate, one can propose that each account of the past is a reconstruction that is controlled by a narrative textual strategy. This strategy dictates how one is to select, from a multitude of possible details, those that may be reorganised into another narrative which is both 'followable' and expresses the desired point of view of the past. Accordingly, this reconstruction, like its narrative predecessor, is always subject to change. For whenever new explanatory aims are set and new questions raised, new slants on the past will be developed and new evidence concerning the events of the past will become available. Change of this sort typifies historical narratives of every kind.

This new 'evidence' becomes available primarily through remembering, or remembering differently. One can argue, then, that there is no single, all purpose-life history to be told, rather one can propose the concept of the construction of multiple histories. The historical account changes whenever the major questions change; for in the context established by each such question, different aspects of events and people and conflictual compromised activity come to the fore in distinctive ways.

The interviewees' remembering, then, can be read as largely a function of the linguistic and paralinguistic context established by one or another question as evidenced in the following exchange:

Margaret: ...did you feel comfortable with your mother and father and brothers?

**Ann Barber: Yes. As far as I am concerned I had a happy childhood. There was no constant fighting and mum and dad never had a quarrel.**

Margaret: Who would handle the punishment?

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J. Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interest. London, Heinemann. 1972. pp.164-165.

**Ann:** Mum as far as I was concerned. One of them told me that dad really took to somebody one day but I don't remember. I can only ever remember getting one good spanking.

Margaret: What had you done?

**Ann:** My younger sister and I were sleeping together - she was only three. She accidentally lost an eye and this time we were sleeping together and she was annoying me and annoying me and I gave her a smack across the ear. Mum took to me with a stick, she really did whop me. It was a long time before I realised that it must have frightened her because my sister only having one eye to have her ear damaged. That was the only time I can remember catching a spanking.<sup>20</sup>

Ann's retelling of this early fragmentary episode encompasses family structure and sibling rivalry and serves to disrupt the motion of shaping the past from the perspective of a unified self in the present. The subjective element in memory, sparked by a series of question, allows Ann to superimpose events 'One of them told me that dad really took to somebody one day...', to fuse events 'As far as I am concerned I had a happy childhood', and telescope events 'It was a long time before I realised that it must have frightened her...'. Diachronic events are grouped together in the narrative on a synchronic plane and considered as only one event. Psychic and social reality are inter-related but must also be recognised as distinct and separate. It is the form of Ann's telling of this story that is the critical point, how she chooses to describe her childhood, in response to my questions, how she makes use of recurrent and discernible narrative strategies:

Margaret: ...So how were you punished if you did something wrong?

**Ann:** I don't know. I can remember one day, and I was very naughty - An aunty was up from the city - one of dad's sisters - she came up and our buggy had a trap-door in the back where you put parcels and this day I got inside there and hid and I knew what I was doing. And they were looking all over the place searching for me and I was watching. And of course we had open wells - how some of us didn't drown I will never know! And I saw them go over and look in the wells - finally I gave in. But I don't remember getting a spanking for that, which I should have got.<sup>21</sup>

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20 OHL., with Ann Barber (née Schocroft) 10/4/89.

21 ibid.

Ann, like the other interviewees, chose to represent herself in a particular way (or ways), which is dependent on a form of seeing and telling that has much in common with the other interviewees, even though they speak from within different class, gender, age, religious and ethnic positions. All the accounts/narratives reveal a symbolic acceptance of stereotyped self-presentation appropriate to the telling of a story. Humour and irreverence formed one main code of reconstructing childhood histories, while seriousness of intent (to be good at school, to please parents, to supplement the family income et cetera) was the other dominant self-representation. In all the oral accounts of 'childhood' in this thesis, including the SA Speaks Oral History Interviews and the Fun 'n' Games oral interviews, a social self is produced where memory and feeling are mediated through commonly transmitted narrative tropes.<sup>22</sup> What becomes evident in the interviews is that we not only have different versions of stories but different versions of time which are shaped by the stories we live by. As Roland Barthes asserted, narrative 'is simply there like life itself ... international, transhistorical, trans-cultural.'<sup>23</sup>

In the chapters which follow, the interviewees' narratives are put forward as a way of translating knowing into telling, a way of reading how human experiences is fashioned into a form assimilable to structures of meaning where the narrator is not elided and a sharp split between 'subject' and 'object' is rejected.<sup>24</sup> In laying out the language, the customs and the common practices of childhood and children's play the links between the individual and the collective are highlighted. The individual's notions of

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<sup>22</sup> SA Speaks. Oral History Project for the Sesquicentenary of South Australia. Mortlock Library of South Australian. Fun 'n Games. Arts Council of South Australia Project. Henley Beach. S.A.

<sup>23</sup> R. Barthes, 'Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives', Music, Image, Text. trans. Stephen Heath. Basic Books, New York, 1977. p.9.

<sup>24</sup> The terms 'knowing' and 'telling' according to The Etymological Dictionary of the Greek Language are the progenitors of : 'narrative', 'narration', 'to narrate' and so forth derived from the latin gnárus - 'knowing', 'acquainted with', 'expert', and so on; and narro, 'relate', 'tell', from the Sanskrit root gná ('know'). It is in this sense I use the words.

'common sense' which, in this thesis, takes into account the emotional, wishful, fantasy-ridden features of action, its adaptive and utilitarian aspects, and the influence on it of the individual's early experiencing of intimate formative relationships and the world at large, can be 'read' in the interviewees' repositories of folk wisdom, colloquial sayings, jokes, mythology, and literature, and among other cultural products such as toys, games, collections and so forth. That 'common sense' is not fixed is obvious. One only has to turn to proverbs and maxims to find that every generalisation has a counter generalisation, yet 'common sense' remains a storehouse of narrative structures and, arguably, it remains the source of intelligibility and certainty in human affairs.<sup>25</sup>

In a sense, then, the interviews are a telling of the self and 'the self' is reconstructed in the telling and the re-telling of the narrative. This is why I make no claim for establishing the validity of any particular 'reading' or any particular 'telling'. 'Life history' is not static, archival, linear or literally retrievable. It is problematic. The ground, then, for establishing any form of 'validity' in the narrative is its own internal consistency. It must be remembered that an oral narrative encompasses more than the telling, for the 'story' is accompanied by paralinguistic features as well. Non-verbal behaviours also emphasise or accentuate multiple possibilities of readings. What follows then is one reading from a multiplicity of readings.

While I earlier stated that there are more similarities than differences between spoken and written discourse, when utilised by historians to support a particular enquiry, one critical area of difference needs elaboration. Oral testament is meant to be heard, not read. It is somewhat akin to listening to a symphony orchestra as opposed to reading the score. The rhythms, pitch, stress, intonation and other phonological forms of speech demand some normalisation of their forms when transposed into written discourse. Whereas in writing there will be no need to repeat statements (unless utilised as a particular literary device), in speech repetition is often necessary to ensure comprehension. It also follows that in a written text one can attempt greater complexity of language since one is aware that a reader can re-read the text many times.

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For example, 'Look before you leap' has a counter proposal in 'He (sic) who hesitates is lost'.

Most speakers/talkers, as evidenced by the interviewees, will intuitively keep their speech simple, preferring a large number of short uninvolved sentences to fewer sentences with a greater amount of subordination. In written discourse the loss of an extremely important component of the original speech - its intonation is significant. One can argue that the manner of the response is as important as the content. Also lost in transposing speech into written discourse is the speaker's accompanying paralinguistic features, such as smiles, frowns, foot tapping, raised eyebrows, and so on which, along with speech ellipses and pauses, can provide an opposite reading of what has been said.<sup>26</sup>

Speech highlights the manner in which memory reconstructs experience. It is pre-eminently 'social' and, as such, provides a framework for analysing individual perception. The question is continually raised as to what is not said, why certain events were narrated and not others. The interviews, arguably, are the closest way of analysing how an individual turns herself or himself into a subject. As later chapters seek to highlight, for the most part self-constitution is not the result of active, conscious decisions, but of subliminal socialisation. What is 'read' in the interviews is the way in which one's identity is formed by conforming oneself over time to tacitly understood 'norms' and generally accepted practices. Self-understanding then can be studied 'objectively' through a matrix of social and discursive practices.

Following Foucault's early interest in perception and in later works his interest in the technologies of the self, it is his awareness of the visually opaque dimension within language itself, which he called its particularly rebus-like character, that informs a reading of the interviews.<sup>27</sup> The 'individual' and 'society' are problematised; Foucault regards both as effects of a production to be specified, rather than as the pre-given objects of the human sciences. It is his consideration of events, phenomena, and

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<sup>26</sup> While the audio tapes contain speech fillers such as er.. and um.., and a range of background noises, the transcriptions do not contain any reference to them in the final copy. Pauses are indicated in the text and notations of laughter, smiles or anger and so forth are entered in parenthesis next to the utterance and sequence of utterances. However, such evocation is limited in effect.

<sup>27</sup> Foucault wrote that '...discourse forms a tissue where the texture of the verbal is already crossed with the chain of the visible'. M. Foucault, Raymond Rousset. Trans. Alphonso Lingis. Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1968. p.148.

techniques embodied in the figure of the 'social' in his studies of objectivising and subjectifying practices that has many important theoretical implications for this thesis. In Foucauldian terms, the concept of 'the social' refers not to the global abstraction 'society' but to a series of methods, techniques, and practices which have a particular form of cohesion.<sup>28</sup>

Foucault's tracing of such methods, techniques and practices addresses the complex constitution of hegemony. Hegemony is analysed as contributing to or constituting a form of social cohesion not through force or coercion, nor necessarily through consent, but most effectively by way of practices, techniques and methods which 'infiltrate' minds and bodies, cultural practices which cultivate behaviours and beliefs, tastes and desires, and needs as seemingly naturally occurring qualities and properties embodied in the psychic and psychological 'reality' of the human subject.

Smart proposes that:

It is by virtue of a dual analytic focus upon forms of knowledge and relations of power through which the human subject has been objectivised and upon techniques of the self and related discourses in terms of which human beings 'have learned to recognise themselves as subjects' respectively that Foucault's work has revealed the complex multiple processes from which the strategic constitution of forms of hegemony may emerge.<sup>29</sup>

Foucault's stated intention of creating 'a history of the different modes by which in our culture human beings are made subjects' is implicit in his analyses of the forms of government and self-government to which human beings have been subject, where the concept of 'government' refers to the way in which the conduct of individuals or groups might be directed. Such an action or practice is synonymous with the achievement or exercise of hegemony.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> While Foucault and Deleuze have given extensive outlines of 'the social', the concept is more explicitly outlined in J. Donzelot, The Policing of Families : Welfare Versus the State. London. Hutchinson, 1980.

<sup>29</sup> Barry Smart. 'The politics of Truth' in David Couzens Hoy, (ed.) Foucault : A Critical Reader. London. Basil Blackwell, 1986. p.160.

<sup>30</sup> For an explicit discussion of this point see M. Foucault 'The Subject and Power' in H.L. Dreyfus and P. Rabinow, Michel Foucault : Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1983. I will return to criticisms of Foucault for allegedly rendering as obsolete the concept of 'the state' later in this chapter. For my use of the term 'hegemony' refer to pages 17-19 of the Introduction.



Finally then the interviews are 'analysed' as processes whereby meaning is produced at the same time as 'subjects' are fabricated and positioned in social relations. The process of signification implicit in memory gives shape to the 'reality' it implicates. It is not the lexis chosen by the interviewees that is determinant or 'representative' of their sense of 'reality', rather it is the practices which constitute everyday lives and are produced and reproduced as an integral part of the production of signs and signifying practices.

Consider the following:

**Coralie Green : ...I don't think we went without food during the Depression. I can remember going without luxuries. I can remember one of my birthdays my father must have gone up to do the grocery shopping, I kept looking at those little frogs, chocolate frogs with green through. They used to sell half a dozen of those in a little box, pink and chocolate and apricot - and I used to look at these and drool.... I think they were sixpence halfpenny for the whole set. I would say 'Can we have those?'. Well, the only birthday present I can remember ever having is a box of those cakes. That is the only birthday present I can remember. (Smiles and laughs). We got others but it is the only one I remember and the best part about it was everybody else was drooling because they all wanted some. (Laughter). I don't think I ate them all but the idea was I could have my pick and if I wanted to I could eat the whole lot by myself. But I would like to think I shared with the others, but I am not sure. (Laughter.)<sup>31</sup>**

While one can 'read' this text at its literal, denotative language level, which implies that the linguistic sign (the lexis) has a given, fixed meaning within the closed order of language, that would be to deny the specificity of the social practices which produced this text/discourse and denies the process of the 'subject's' conceptualisation. It reduces 'a word' (a morpheme), and therefore a language system, to an uncomplicated referent of 'the real' world. It negates the view that meaning occurs through the functioning of a subject and proposes instead that meaning occurs only through the fixed position of a sign.

The 'frog cake' is a delightful story at its literal, denotative level. But it can also be read as a signifier of a number of unconscious (and conscious) chains of meaning for

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allegedly rendering as obsolete the concept of 'the state' later in this chapter. For my use of the term 'hegemony' refer to pages 17-19 of the Introduction.

Coralie. Her desire for, and the possession (and consumption) of the frog cake can be read in multiple symbolic registers, in her retelling of her relationship with her father (frequently out of work) and her mother (according to Coralie a dominant, self-absorbed woman), her feelings of not being a 'wanted' child (her mother was very ill at the time of her birth and she was then the youngest of two brothers and a sister), her acute awareness of her 'hand-me-down' clothes, and her sense of alienation from her peers due to her parents' intense Christian public preachings. In her retelling of this narrative Coralie is redescribing, reinterpreting, recontextualising, and reducing (or augmenting) various discursive subject positions in the present. The past is used to make the present more intelligible and the present is used to make the past more intelligible, which is to say, more coherent, continuous and convincing. Coralie's historical narrative is situated in the present. According to Shafer, it is only when these new versions of the narrative are given a secure place in a continuous, coherent and convincing 'life history' that personal change and further development is facilitated.<sup>32</sup> For Coralie, the 'frog cake' signifies multiple meanings which will never remain fixed or constant.

The sense of a narrative 'event' as an always ongoing dialogue is evident in Coralie's memories of her family's involvement in her mother's welfare work during the depression:

**Coralie:** I think she saw the need and got an office. She used to go to the office every afternoon in Victoria Square. They used to sing in the street. I hate the thought of it, (shudders) but they did, we all did, the whole family - the boys used to play the violin!

Margaret: What would you sing?

**Coralie:** Hymns....They would take up a collection and then she'd use that money to do welfare work during the week.

Margaret: Where would you go to sing?

**Coralie:** You know where Myer is in Rundle Mall? At the side of Rundle Mall every Sunday night.... Salvation Army used to be at one end and when they finished we'd start. They would preach - both her and my father. Same sort of thing as the Salvation Army. Very much like that. I don't think they

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Roy Shafer, The Analytic Attitude. Basic Books, N.Y. 1983. See in particular Chapter 11. 'Psychoanalytic Interpretation'. pp.183-193.

saw themselves as being in opposition to the Salvation Army or I don't know why they thought they were necessary rather than the Salvation Army. I don't know that they had anything better to offer. I think they thought the Salvation Army were too conservative because they were against smoking, lipstick, and things like that. They thought they were a little bit more liberated.... I picked up these vibes that one of the reasons we weren't acceptable in society was religion. I picked that up very early on.... What I can remember, I was about Grade Four, the worst thing you could ever imagine was that you'd see a child from school come there. And I would try very hard to hide behind my sister or brothers. I can remember that time saying something to my parents. I was told 'this is what we do for Jesus', or something like that.<sup>33</sup>

I use this lengthy fragment of discourse to focus on the myriad modes in which this text can be read. I have appropriated it in this context in one way and readers of the thesis will reconstruct it in many other ways, all of which are 'readings' and appropriations embedded in historically specific processes of reading and interpretation. For Coralie, and all the others interviewed, this is not just 'a story' with a fixed meaning, it is a text/narrative capable of taking on many other forms in other contexts. Coralie's articulations are products of discursive practices. As the meanings signified in the text are many, so too is the language used to convey 'the real'. In the retelling of one's childhood there is always a sense of multiple voices, multiple childhoods.

#### Constructing the subject.

The world of images and signs experienced during 'childhood' are constructed and reconstructed in the interviewee's memories spatially, temporally and, in the moments of retelling, dialectically. The complex and complicated material, symbolic and semiotic positioning of children ( as 'child', 'male', 'female', 'son', 'daughter', 'friend', 'brother', 'sister', 'schoolchild'. 'student', 'truant', 'girl', 'boy', 'consumer' and so forth) as aged and gendered subjects in social and cultural history are made 'accessible' for reflection, for both speaker and listener (scriptor and reader) in the oral discourses.

As I have asserted, how these constructions of subjectivity are 'read' remains problematic in that the 'meanings' made by individuals of their childhood do not remain fixed or static; the texts are not 'representing' a unified self, rather they are polyvocal

texts. In learning how we 'read', that is how all of us have been positioned to read social and cultural texts, it is necessary to have some insights into the centrality of the roles 'language' plays in the construction of 'identity.' I wish to spend some time elaborating the notions of language, knowledge, power and the subject which underpin this thesis. In philosophical terms 'the subject' is the generic term for 'the person', 'the individual' or the human being. In psychological terms 'the individual' is synonymous with 'the subject'. In this thesis 'the subject' is postulated as being constituted in and through the social domain. 'Subjectivity' refers to individuality and self-awareness, that is the condition of being a subject, which is 'read' not as a singular unity but focuses on a multiplicity of dynamic subjects, who are always positioned in relation to particular discourses and practices which constitute the condition of being subject. This is an important perspective if one is to make links between a diverse and contradictory social domain and the multiple and contradictory subject.

How are subjects positioned within language? In linguistics, in his seminal Course in General Linguistics, Ferdinand de Saussure referred to the synchronic approach of examining the 'here' and 'now' of everyday language, the static and unchanging aspect of language at a given point in time.<sup>34</sup> De Saussure's emphasis on the synchronic, as opposed to the diachronic which seeks to understand the elements of language in terms of their origin, centred on the belief that only the relationship between the elements of a given language could provide access to the meaning, or significance of these elements. De Saussure pointed out that etymology in no way provides a knowledge of the present meanings of words. The reason for this is that the relationship between signifier (a particular sound image) and signified (the concept) is arbitrary.<sup>35</sup>

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34 Ferdinand de Saussure, Course in General Linguistics. Fontana. 1974.

35 To elucidate what follows it is important to outline how de Saussure defined this relationship. 'The bond between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary. Since I mean by sign the whole that results from the associating of the signifier with the signified, I can simply say: the linguistic sign is arbitrary. The idea of 'sister' is not linked by any inner relationship to the succession of sounds s-o-r which serves as its signifier in French; that it could be represented equally by just any other sequence is provided by the differences among languages and by the very existence of different languages: the signified 'ox' has its signifier b-o-f on one side of the border and o-k-s (Ochs) on the other'. Ibid., pp.67-68.

The meaning of a word then, according to de Saussure, can only be established in terms of how it functions in relation to other words. Language is a system and when it comes to describing the functions of the elements in this system, synchrony has a primacy over diachrony.

Along with Roland Barthes, who supported de Saussure's theory of the arbitrary nature of the sign and extended it to encompass his belief that the meaning and nature of the literary text is founded on the configuration or arrangement of the definable elements in texts and not in the privileging of 'authorship',<sup>36</sup> de Saussure's theory of language has been criticised for relying implicitly on a rationalist theory of meaning and consciousness because it rests on a notion of signs as representing ideas which precede any actual utterance and are, subsequently, timeless and context free. Yet, while de Saussure's use of the sign remains problematic it focused critical attention on the distinction between language as speech and as writing, and the meaning, or signification, of practices and their effects. The importance of Course of General Linguistics was the attempt to define these differences.

Langage was defined as the term which designates language per se. Langage includes within its scope all systems which can be viewed as a system of exchange in which the relationship between a signifier and a signified is arbitrary. Langue, according to de Saussure, is the generic term designating all natural languages. In this sense it can be translated literally as 'tongue' (of a nation or of a people). Parole on the other hand is understood as referring to the individual speech utterance activated within a particular langue. Different speech acts, therefore, can take place within one uniform langue. De Saussure went on to point out the basis of this, that langue is the common structure or grammar which enables one to identify many heterogeneous speech acts as belonging to the same natural language. A more profound sense of the terms arise if langue is understood to designate the structure or grammar of a multitude of speech acts,

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Barthes wrote: '...the modern writer (scriptor) is born simultaneously with his text; he (sic) is in no way supplied with a being which precedes or transcends his writing, he is in no way the subject of which his book is the predicate; there is no other time than that of the utterance, and every text is eternally written here and now.' Roland Barthes, 'The Death of an Author', in S. Sears and G.W. Lord (eds.), The Discontinuous Universe. 1972. p.10.

and parole is understood as referring to the 'empirical' manifestations of langue. In a de Saussurian sense, parole refers to the manifest content and langue refers to the latent form of any particular language.<sup>37</sup> In terms of writing histories this theory has profound implications, both for the way that 'history' has been written and for the way that 'history' has been understood. In general, empiricist texts have failed to acknowledge any discontinuity between perception and a system of representation.<sup>38</sup> In such texts language functions as though it were a transparent veil which never impedes a direct access to the 'object'. Empiricism is read as unconscious of langage (langue/parole). While de Saussure's theory of representation has had many criticisms for privileging the phonemic level over the orthographic level, it has fixed attention on the construction and constitution of the speaking subject in language, and, of central import to this thesis, the constitution and construction of 'identity' (subjectivity) in and through the langage of history.

The positioning of subjects in langage was further focused upon as the 'subject' of theoretical debate by Pêcheux, who coined the concept of inter discourse.<sup>39</sup> As elaborated by Woods, Pêcheux, argued that the constitution of subjects is always specific in respect of each subject '...and this can be conceived of in terms of a single, original (and mythic) interpellation - the entry into language and the symbolic - which constitutes a space wherein a complex of continually interpellated subject forms interrelate, each subject form being a determinate formation of discursive processes.<sup>40</sup> For Pêcheux, the discursive subject is therefore an inter discourse, the product of the effects of discursive practices traversing the subject throughout its history, the critical distinction from the theories of de Saussure is that Pêcheux privileged the site of interpellation, not 'the

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37 This is a simplified approximation only.

38 To paraphrase Foucault and Barthes, we can never say what we see because what we see does not reside in what we say. Language always demonstrates its capacity to 'say something quite other than what it says'.

39 Marcel Pêcheux, Analyse Automatique du Discourse. Paris. Dunod 1969 and Les Vérités de la Palice. Paris. Maspero. 1975. R. Woods 'Discourse analysis : the work of Marcel Pêcheux', in Ideology and Consciousness, No. 2. Autumn, 1977.

40 Woods, *Ibid.*, p.36.

subject'. The intersection between constituted subjects and specific discursive positions presents as the site of ideological struggle. 'Interpellation' has been variously conceptualised, but of interest to this discourse is Althusser's notion of 'interpellation'. In his grappling with the question 'Is the subject constitutive or constituted?' Althusser drew on the traditions of structuralism, whose central theses were the critique of the notion of the individual as both the ultimate origin and the destination of history and the concomitant emphasis on social, linguistic and cultural structures as the determinant elements in the explanation of social phenomena.<sup>41</sup>

Althusser proposed the term 'interpellation' to describe how a subject recognises himself or herself in imaginary relations. Laclau expanded the term's usage by locating it at the level of discourse : 'what constitutes the unifying principle of an ideological discourse is the "subject" interpellated and thus constituted through this discourse.'<sup>42</sup> Ideological struggle, then, can be read as being located at the level of the interplay between the subject and the discursive. However, there remains a degree of interpretative difference.

This stress on contradictory interpellation emphasises the unstable, provisional and dynamic properties of positioning, rather than adopting a static sociological ascription which posits the subject as identifying with the dominant discourses or being in opposition to them. Pêcheux's concept of 'interdiscourse' transforms the relation of one text/one subject to that of a multiplicity of texts/subject relations, in which encounters can be understood not in isolation but only in the moments of their combination. Subjects too, have 'histories'. In accepting this premise the primacy of

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In Althusser's essay, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', he theorized the ideological as a level which, though determined 'in the last instance' by the economic, was in practice 'relatively autonomous'. His argument was that the primary 'ideological state apparatuses' of modern times are the family, the church and the school, with different ones being differentially effective depending on the historical epoch. Althusser's distinction between the 'real' and 'imaginary' relations to the economy allowed him to break with the conception of ideology as simple representation. He contended that people act 'as if' the ideological is 'real' and by doing this make it the reality they 'live'. L. Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', in Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays. Condon, New Left Books. 1971.

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E. Laclau. Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory. London, New Left Books, 1977, p.63.

signification as the process of making sense of subjectivities, as opposed to 'representation', is stressed. It is a production not a representation. The argument is that a 'reality' represented does not determine the representation or the means of representation. Rather, the process of signification itself gives shape to the reality it implicates.<sup>43</sup> The issues of 'the real' and 'representation' are critical to the position developed in this thesis, which extends from these problematics to produce the notion of discursive practice, rather than signifying practice and includes the conception of social regulation.

The importance of the construction of subjectivity within language and the effectivity of subject positioning within 'ideology' needs to be addressed not just in universal terms but in an historically specific mode. The use of Foucault's approach to histories of the production of knowledge and his position in relation to language can now be discussed within the general theoretical frameworks I have just explicated. In The Archaeology of Knowledge Foucault outlined his position in relation to language by constructing it through the historical location and critique of various dominant theories of language and linguistics. He grouped and identified these theories under the categories of formalisation and interpretation. His criticism of the 'formalist system' (represented by de Saussure and Derrida) centred on that 'school's' conception of language as an autonomous structure, with its own laws of construction and application. He also criticised the way specific language functions/concepts such as the 'sentence', the 'proposition' and the 'speech act' have been conceptualised in Anglo-American discourse analysis. In Foucault's view the totalisation and particularisation of concepts sharing common criteria for specifying language as an analytical object through and in which certain uniform and general features are identified, highlighting its formal and universal features, denies or ignores the 'historical specificity' of the particular linguistic act and the 'historical determinations' which may influence its appearance.<sup>44</sup>

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43 For an informative and succinct discussion of 'representation' see J. Henriques, et al, Changing the Subject. Psychology, social regulation and subjectivity. Methuen. London. 1984. Particularly, Introduction to Section 2. pp.91-118.

44 In a particularly interesting passage, Foucault queries 'Has not the practice of revolutionary discourse and scientific discourse in Europe over the past two hundred



In defining interpretation as the second dominant feature of general theories of language, Foucault posited that this concept is embedded in a methodology which sections the written and/or the spoken in dualistic terms of its 'internal' and 'external' aspects. An assumption is made that 'beneath' the external forms of language lies a 'sovereign subjectivity' which in philosophical terms is understood as the logos of reason. In neither the formalisation nor interpretation systems of language is there contained the possibility of an analysis of the particular historical conditions under which individual linguistic formulations have appeared. Foucault rejects the notion that language owes the forms of its appearance to the particular and not general conditions and posits that there is no total or exhaustive account of language. Hence, particularly in The Archaeology of Knowledge, Foucault conceptualised a way in which individual linguistic elements, which he referred to as statements, are linked by a coherence to form and define a distinct field of objects ('madness', 'criminality', for example), a particular repertoire of concepts, a specific régime of truth (which pays as much attention to what is left unsaid as what is said), and a definite set of subject positions. Foucault defined such coherent formations as discursive practices. He explicated that the coherence of a specific body of statements constituting a particular discourse is governed and defined by the principle of regularity.<sup>45</sup> Such a concept attempts to account for the ways in which statements are combined and coexist under determinate historical conditions. It attempts to define the conditions of formation under which specific types of statements are consistently distributed and dispersed over a given series of places within the discursive field. As such, Foucault's understanding of the position occupied by subjects within language and discourse marks a radical departure from the positions espoused by de Saussure,

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years freed you from this idea that words are wind, an external whisper, a beating of wings that one has difficulty in hearing in the serious matter of history?' Michel Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge. Ibid., p.71.

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This is perhaps, in its English usage, an unfortunate choice of terms because Foucault does not in any way mean to imply a regularity based on formal rules of construction. He rejects any notion of an idealist, self-generating structure. For a practical delineation of the deployment of the principle of regularity and the position(s) occupied by subjects within discourse see Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish. New York. Pantheon. 1977., and The History of Sexuality, Vol. I. New York. Pantheon. 1978.

Derrida, Althusser, Lacan, and Freud.<sup>46</sup> The theorisation of subjectivity in the linguistic, semiological and psychoanalytic traditions, while varying in their understanding of the ways in which subjects are positioned within language, have a common theoretical position which attempts to construct general principles of subjectivity and language which are assumed to remain constant over time and across cultures.

For Foucault the subject of a linguistic statement is absolutely 'general' : 'in so far as it can be filled by virtually any individual when he (sic) formulates the statement; and in so far as one and the same individual may occupy in turn, in the same series of statements, different positions, and assume the role of different subjects'.<sup>47</sup> According to Foucault, such a position can be maintained because the enunciation of a discursive statement is not dependent on the subject/author as its cause of origin but rather on 'the prior existence of a number of effective operations that need not have been performed by one and the same individual...'.<sup>48</sup>

To understand Foucault's delineation of the operation of power within a discourse it must be 'read' in conjunction with Foucault's theorising of the enunciative subject. For Foucault the exercise of power relations is not seen as external to a particular discursive practice and as such it should not be sought 'in the primary existence of a central point, in a unique source of sovereignty from which secondary and descendant forms would emanate'.<sup>49</sup> Power is imminent/implicit in the constitution of discourse, it defines the type of relations of force which operate within a specific discursive practice and it distributes (hierarchically) the various discursive subject positions within a field of unequal relations. Within Foucault's framework of the constitution of

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<sup>46</sup> Although I have not elaborated the discursive positions of Derrida, Lacan and Freud, at this stage, fuller discussions follow in the thesis.

<sup>47</sup> Michel Foucault, The Archaeology of Knowledge. p.94.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Foucault, The History of Sexuality. p.93.

subjectivity, power is not 'held' or exercised by particular individuals, nor does it result 'from the choice or decision of an individual subject.'<sup>50</sup>

It is important to acknowledge in this delineation of power-knowledge-subject constructions that detractors of Foucault have accused him of generating 'discourse babble' and 'discourse determinism'. Indeed it would appear to be far easier for some critics to pose questions such as "Is everything discourse?" or "Is power everywhere and nowhere in particular?" as end points rather than analyse such recalcitrant concepts in any detail.<sup>51</sup> Perhaps for some critics the task becomes too daunting when, in its general sense, discourse has such a long ancestry.<sup>52</sup> It is within the complex genealogy of discourse that Foucault comes to oppose the pre-eighteenth century view of discourse as assertion and possession, of permanent and universal human reason, and of absolute objective truth. Where 'knowledge' was seen as the process of enunciation itself, not the object of that enunciation. 'To be finite, then, would simply be to be trapped in the laws of a perspective which, while allowing a certain apprehension - of the type of perception or understanding - prevents it from ever being universal and definitive intellection'.<sup>53</sup> To theorise an answer to 'is discourse everything?' one has to recognise that Foucault attempted to tie a variety of theoretical works, ranging from the semiotic to the psychological to the philosophical, to his histories of knowledges in his examination of

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50 Ibid., p.95.

51 Jeffrey Weeks, Sex, Politics and Society - The regulation of sexuality since 1800. Longman, London. 1981., and Jeffrey Weeks "Foucault for Historians". History Workshop Journal 14, Autumn, 1982. pp.106 - 119.

52 An excellent epistemic approach to understanding fundamental shifts in, and development of, modern Western discourse is contained in Timothy J. Reiss. The Discourse of Modernism. Cornell University Press. London, 1982.

53 Michel Foucault, The Order of Things. (Trans. from Les mots et les choses.) New York, 1973. p.373. Later in the book Foucault writes: ' this is why the analysis of finitude never ceases to use, as a weapon against historicism, the part of itself that historicism has neglected: its aim to reveal, at the foundation of all the positivities and before them, the finitude that makes them possible; where historicism fought for the possibility and justification of concrete relations between limited totalities, whose mode of being was pre-determined by life, or by social forms, or by the signification of language, the analytic of finitude tries to question this relation of a human being to the being which, by designating finitude, renders the positivities possible in their concrete mode of being.' p.393.

the emergence and functioning of the human sciences. My readings of his various texts allows me the proposal that such a question, 'is discourse everything?', betrays an insufficient understanding of the attempts Foucault made to reveal that while there may be rules regarding possible statements, which delimit the sayable, they do not imply a closure; in practice discourses delimit what can be said, whilst simultaneously providing the spaces (the concepts, analogies, models and metaphors) for making new statements within any specific discourse. Thus, in this thesis, the construct 'child' is positioned within various discourses - the discourses of mental measurement and cognitive development, to name but two. It is proposed that discourse is more usefully regarded as the result of a practice of production which is at once material, discursive and complex; inscribed always in relation to other practices of production of discourse. Borrowing from Henriques et al:

Every discourse is a part of a discursive complex; it is locked in an intricate web of practices, bearing in mind that every practice is by definition both discursive and material. The problem is to decide which discourses and practices in a specific instance ... constitute the complex, what effects the different parts of the complex have and for what reasons.<sup>54</sup>

To return, somewhat briefly, to the earlier contention that Foucault has substituted an idea of subjectless power for the concept of 'the state', this is, at best, a reductionist analysis of his works. In the context of this thesis there is an attempt to apply Foucauldian analyses to work towards a theory of subjectivity which implies a different politics of transformation. The sites of 'the family', 'the neighbourhood', 'the school', 'the playground' and so forth are analysed to reveal how the very notion of the 'individual', of 'child' and of 'play' is a product of discourses which have developed through the emergence of governmental practices of individualising techniques of power which are deployed in everyday life and directed at individuals. The concept of 'children's play', because of its insertion in modern social and psychological practice, has helped to constitute the very form of modern individuality. The maxim that 'every child plays' is a taken-for-granted, common-sense fact about human beings and our lived experience. That this way of understanding ourselves, of seeing ourselves, is the 'result'

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<sup>54</sup> Henriques, et al., Changing the Subject, p.106.

of an historically specific production can only be understood when the meanings and assumptions about 'childhood' and about 'play' are deconstructed. How the modern form of individuality has been constructed is a prerequisite for understanding and bringing about change in any hegemonic situation. The insertion of normalised play practices into notions of child development, and into progressive pedagogical practice, is traced in the thesis as one way of showing that the practices cannot be separated from the social and political conditions surrounding that practice.

The use of Foucault's approach to histories of the production of knowledge is an important feature in this thesis. 'Play' is posited as a body of knowledge and its 'history' is traced (retraced) from the recognition of the complexity and historicity of its production and development in relation to 'normalised' play notions. The construction of the 'individual' imbricated within these practices and technologies forms a second focus for analysis. As such, an attempt is made to trace the emergence of the 'child' and 'play' as both an object of scientific enquiry, an object of specific practices such as schooling, and as the recipient of a number of normalising practices, such as child-rearing, play behaviour, and so forth, as part of the production of the individual as the 'normal' subject-form. Genealogical approaches pose questions as to why specific notions of the subject ('child', 'play') as an individual entity have become part of current notions of 'childhood', of child development and educational practice and analyse the body of statements and historically specific events (the debates, the official reports, the establishment of compulsory schooling et cetera) which had demonstrable effectivity in the development of 'play' as a central notion of child-life. To paraphrase Foucault, such traces reveal how subjectivity 'introduces itself into history and gives it the breadth of life'.<sup>55</sup>

Too often 'historical' works examining the operation of various institutional sites, particularly the apparatus of 'the state', have paid too little attention to the structures of language, the modes of signification, and theories of subjectivity, which play(s) a crucial role in the construction of 'official' discourses. There is an urgent

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Michel Foucault, 'Is it useless to revolt?'. Philosophy and Social Criticism, Vol. 8. 1981, p.8.

need to pay attention to both language structure and usage in historically specific locations in order to understand how and why 'speaking subjects' are continually repositioned within the symbolic order, thought 'historically' to be a particular formation of social practices and discourses.<sup>56</sup> If one is to conceive of a range of socially and institutionally constructed possible subjectivities available to individuals, then close attention to forms of language within discursive practices is essential.

From de Saussure to Foucault, and including the works of many other researchers not discussed, one becomes aware of the lack of an extant language for speaking and writing about histories of childhoods; of the critical need to deconstruct empiricist notions of 'historical time' - of 'past' and 'present' as an homogeneous linear sequence of events; of the critical need to decentre diachronic approaches to writing 'history'; and the need to perceive of all historical discourses as products of re-memorisation.<sup>57</sup>

The 'subject' of 'childhood' has suffered from the problematics of periodisation and chronology. With many historians the distinction between the individual and the collective has been blurred. This thesis attempts to evoke a sense of many beginnings and many foundations, as well as many possible subjectivities. Perhaps by focusing on the possibility of multiple subjectivities this is one way in which an 'historian' can attain a sense of 'objectivity'. Luisa Passerini is sensitive to this notion in regards to oral histories, as is Paul Thompson:

We cannot afford to lose sight of the peculiar specificity of oral material, and we have to develop conceptual approaches - and indeed insist upon that type of analysis - that can succeed in drawing out their full implications. Above all, we should not ignore that the raw material of oral history consists not just in factual statements, but is pre-eminently a representation and expression of culture, and therefore includes not only literal narrations but also the dimension of memory, ideology and sub-conscious desires.<sup>58</sup>

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I recognize that the phrase 'speaking subjects' is in itself problematic. To deploy such a phrase is to imply a particular class of discourse, a class based on the assumption of the identity of an 'I'. It becomes the index of a discursive class that conceals the necessity for conceiving of discourse as a practice of imposition and ordering.

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While holding a very different theoretical position to Freud, it is interesting to note that Freud's concept of 'screen-memory' emerged in the light of his work on childhood memories as evinced in such works as Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood.

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Paul Thompson, The Voice of the Past : Oral History. Oxford University Press. 1978. p 103.

I believe that Thompson's use of the terms 'representation' and 'ideology' (in his sense as particular representations of social reality) to be somewhat limiting, in that it proposes a relation of appearance to essence or phenomenal form to real form, and I have previously argued that the 'reality' represented in the oral interviews in this thesis does not determine the representation or the means of representation, rather it is the process of signification (the notion of discursive) itself that gives shape to the reality it implicates. However, I consider the work of such historians as Thompson, Passerini and Tröger, in the relation of narrative discourse to 'the real', to be of particular import to this thesis. Their works have offered a challenge to dominant claims about the real and existing (and pre-existing) power relations to appear rational and objective, and have opened-up the dichotomised spectrum of 'public' memory versus 'private' memory. As such, the works of Thompson, Tröger and Passerini provide an impetus for the analysis of functioning subjects in the production of knowledge and in making history, and the analysis of the functioning of discourse in the production of everyday social and material life.

Memory, as discourse, is caught in a materiality which is an historical product. As such, memory, as 'truth', can no longer be formulated in terms of closeness to the truth, but as part of a wider network of 'what can one say?', 'what is to be done?'; that is in terms of régimes of truth and the politics of truth. For the interviewees, it is not important to establish the truth of their childhood but to acknowledge that we are always dealing with already stated positions and continuing struggles about what makes sense and what it is to be. The subject of children's play, the discourse, its 'author' or speaker, is itself imbricated in a web of 'calculations'. Truth is at once a material, discursive, political and subjective question.

Notions of the real, and truth, and the need for a symbolic language are implicit in the oral history research work of Anna Maria Tröger. Tröger's interviews with survivors of the bombing of German cities, during the Second World War, particularly women who lived in Berlin, posit that there was a great need to maintain an 'independent subjectivity' as the greatest effect, long term, of this experience is in the psychological

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realm.<sup>59</sup> She contrasts her recognition that there is an obvious need to talk about these experiences with the 'public' and 'private' cultural speechlessness 'a painful lack of words, of metaphors, or an appropriate language signifying the human experience which denotes the anthropological meaning of airborne warfare'.<sup>60</sup> Tröger's research highlighted the discordance between 'public', official discourse about Germany's involvement in World War Two and women's memories of their experiences. Yet, significantly, she relates that, despite an ability to verbalise their experiences, a protective smoke-screen about 'accountability' (for fascism, nazism, concentration camps, and Jewish 'pogroms') is always held in place. 'That victims are responsible too, even for their own victimisation, never crosses their mind ... If it had, its impact would have been truly revolutionary on the way women see themselves in history, as historical subjects instead of being objects of history'.<sup>61</sup>

That this element of contradictory subjectivity is inherent in Tröger's oral history research is not surprising as it exists in all oral narrative, and, as such, 'contradictoriness' necessarily undermines the concept of an unified self and subject, which the narrative 'form' ostensibly accepts. (In the interviews I conducted this 'contradictoriness' revealed itself more as a shifting sense of self articulated in different speech forms.) In Passerini's sixty-seven interviews with men and women who experienced a twenty-year period of fascism in Italy, she utilised the interviews to focus on the styles of speech chosen by her interviewees to recount their memories.<sup>62</sup> How what is said may be heard as an expression of a set of collective experiences (the collective identity of workers in Turin between the Wars), is of primary import, not that of reconstructing individual lives. Passerini 'reads' across a series of personal testimonies to discover the collective representations they employ.

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59 Anna Maria Tröger. 'The Conceptualisation of the Subject in Oral History and Feminist Research'. Paper presented at the Humanities Research Centre Conference, University of Adelaide, August 1986.

60 Ibid.

61 Ibid.

62 Passerini, 'Memory'.



Both historians provide a reading of oral history as a way of understanding individual subjects and subjectivities, and both ask questions as to what it means to exist (to be a female child, a man, a schoolchild, the writer/researcher) the 'I', the 'we', the 'they', and the 'us'. They show in their interviews that all historical sources are, in dichotomous terminology, false and therefore have to be confronted so that they are shown as filters for certain angles and views. Most importantly both Passerini and Tröger's interviews demonstrate that the unconscious must be taken more heavily into historical consideration.

Tröger, in particular, is interested in reworking a proposal of the 'subject', in which an individual constitutes himself/herself in active exchange with the world. This mirroring or reflecting of oneself is not unlike Lacan's work on linking the psyche to the social domain.<sup>63</sup> It is within oral narratives that one becomes aware that the notion of a unitary subject is a myth, a chimera produced through the social condition of a particular society. In Lacanian theory it is the entry into language which is the pre-condition for becoming conscious or aware of oneself as a distinct entity, within the terms set by pre-existing social relations and cultural laws. Of central concern to this thesis is Lacan's argument that such a process simultaneously founds the unconscious - 'the unconscious is structured like a language'.<sup>64</sup> This is consistent with Freud's early texts, particularly The Interpretation of Dreams (1900), which detailed that repressed ideas, memories, dreams and fantasies must be spoken if they are to be recovered. Needs, wishes and desires, as outlined and distinguished by Freud, in his structural theory of the

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I am sure that Tröger would dismiss an elaborated analysis of any notions of strong links between Hegel and post-structuralism, yet, inherent in her work is a re-working of Hegel's notions of becoming, of recognition and reflection, of consciousness as identity, that is the notion that subjectivity is developed within discursive relations. Even within Hegel's statement that 'all history is the history of the struggle between master and slave' there is the possibility of transcending this negative dialectic. The 'autonomous self' is capable of forging a sense of being other than that of a 'slave'. If oral history is read, in an Hegelian sense, as a history of the fight between master and slave, it inherently contains the seeds of its own dichotomous dissolution. If there is no unitary self, there is no unitary 'master' or 'slave'. Both 'master' and 'slave' can be read as historical constructs produced and positioned within multiple discursive relations and practices.

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An elaborated discussion of Lacan, in relation to sexuality, is contained in Chapter 7. It is Lacan's account of the deconstruction of the unitary subject that is of import to this chapter.

Mind (the Ego and the Id, and the introduction of the tripartite division in the psyche between the conscious, pre-conscious and unconscious systems) assumes a central position in Lacan's theorising of the functioning of the unconscious in terms of language.<sup>65</sup> Where Freud talked of 'memory traces', Lacan drew on de Saussure's account of the linguistic sign.

Regarding the unconscious as consisting of a chain of signifiers, or relationships between them, Lacan drew on Jakobson's notions of metaphor and metonymy to refer to these relationships.<sup>66</sup> Metaphor applies to synchronic relationships, relationships based on similarity, or to vertical aspects of the linguistic code, whereas, metonymy applies to diachronic aspects, relations of contiguity, of the successive, linearly progressive relationships between signs. These notions are particularly demonstrated in the imagery and working of dreams. Within the framework of the thesis, the workings of the unconscious, in relation to the 'needs' and 'desire' to play, requires not just a psychoanalytic analysis but a social and historical explanation. Moving away from Lacan's emphasis on symbolic order towards a concept of positioning 'subjects' within discursive practices, it could become more useful to investigate children's play in terms of the functioning of social regulation through the register of desires and the instrumentalisation of pleasures.

Thus, one can argue that the social regulation of children's play can function, not only in a sense through overt oppression, but rather through defining the parameters and content of choice, fixing how individuals come to want what they want. 'Playing', then, as a construct, cannot be understood outside the discursive parameters which construct its parameters and 'norms'. Why did some of the women I interviewed respond to questions about playing with boys with 'Oh, I never bothered with them. You just knew you were supposed to play with the girls'? Why were certain desires manifested in some girls and

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In this account the unconscious is the site of repressed ideas, and the pre-conscious consists of memories not currently present in consciousness but to which it already has access. In reading oral narrative it is crucial, then, to understand that the unconscious is not the seat of drives or instincts, but of ideational representatives, signs or memories. These become attached to words and find psychical expression.

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See R. Jakobson and M. Halle, Fundamentals of Language. The Hague. Mouton. 1956.

not others? How are these desires produced over the course of an individual's development? Under what conditions can these desires be accessed? In oral narratives one can attempt to explore the historical location, production and the specificity of the discourses for understanding desires. Within other contingent discursive practices, the production of toys particularly, the content of desires can be understood as neither timeless nor arbitrary, but enmeshed in historical specificity. The fixing and channelling of desires, for example - 'to be a good mother', implicit and explicit in such gendered cultural practices of providing dolls for the little girls as 'play objects', is inextricably intertwined in power - desire - knowledge relations, wherein subjectivity is intricately. So many of the women I interviewed expressed the desire to be/have been a 'good mother' and stressed satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the results. How did they come to have such desires? What does it mean to be a 'good mother'? I would argue that such a construct cannot be understood outside the discursive practices which fashion its parameters and norms nor can it be understood outside the relation this has to the motivation of the individual to the discursive practices which positions her.

How, then, does one read resistance or denial of the signifying practices of the cultural designation of sexual identity? Are they a form of the Lacanian search for the 'Other'? That is, the 'universal' law of the phallus (the phallus being the symbol of the control of desire) which sets up the limits within which the 'I' as subject can function? While Lacan's phallogocentric theory is problematic, and perhaps the ultimate fantasy, his 'discourse of desire' is useful in focusing on the psychic representation of such desires, fantasies, wishes and drives.<sup>67</sup>

Passerini, in building up her oral history interviews along psychoanalytic lines, develops a view of the subject as internally inconsistent and conflicting as he or she struggles to express long-term needs. Passerini, in her study of Italian fascism, writes of an ambivalent subject, pressured by subconscious desires and relating to internalised figures. She argues that the subjectivity of the group under study, exemplified by the

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However, along with Habermas, who designated the contents of the unconscious as deformed, privatised, degrammatised language, Lacan's perspective of the fixing of sexual identity remains ahistorical.

informant being interviewed, must neither be collapsed into material conditions, as an epiphenomenon, nor read as intrinsically and spontaneously subversive, but should be interpreted as a moment of critical consciousness - 'the point at which the break is made from the determinism of the cultural and psychological contents of subjectivity, at the very moment in which it also succeeds in elaborating and articulating these.'<sup>68</sup> For Passerini, the 'dimensions' of history only come to light with the conceptualisation of subjectivity, a notion enriched by the recognition that 'the raw material of oral history consists not just in factual statements, but is pre-eminently an expression and representation of culture and, therefore, includes not only literal narrations but also the dimensions of memory, ideology and subconscious desire.'<sup>69</sup>

Desire, as a product of psychic, social and cultural relations and practices is expressed in oral narrative as an attempt to make the 'real' desirable (and the desirable 'real'), make the 'real' into an object of desire and to impose upon events that are represented as 'real' a formal coherence. The value attached to narrativity in the representation of 'real' events arises out of a desire to have real events display the coherence, integrity, fullness and closure of an image of life that is and only can be imaginary. A narrated event then, is a temporal icon; a symbolic presentation of a sequence of events connected by subject matter and related by 'time'. A narration is a text which refers, or seems to refer, to some set of events outside of itself. Such a text always involves its interpreter in the construction of a very specific kind of iconic interpretant, which linguists call 'diegesis'.

A narrative, then, is read as a specific form of collective sign or text which has for its 'object' a desire for a sequence of events and for its interpretant a diegesis (the icon of a series of events).<sup>70</sup> It is an obvious formal feature of narrative texts, the

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<sup>68</sup> Luisa Passerini, 'Work, Ideology and Consensus under Italian Fascism', in History Workshop Journal. No.8. Autumn, 1979. p.104.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p.84.

<sup>70</sup> For example, in language, metaphors are made through the activation of conceptual iconicity. Metaphors keep language open to life, preventing closure of the arbitrary system of symbols by continually altering the symbolic fields that surround each symbol with potential meanings.

interviews, that the events (stories) are always presented in the past tense as having already happened. Even when the grammatical tense of the discourse is shifted by the interviewees to the present, the fact of textualisation ensures that interpretation follows the event. To speak of the future is to predict, to prophesy or speculate - not to narrate. But no narrative version can be independent of a particular teller or occasion of telling. It is always constructed to accord with a particular set of purposes or interest.

The critical point to understand is that the interviewees could have constructed other tellings in response to my questions, responses perceived as relating to 'reality'. The version of telling is always (amongst others) a response to, or a function of, the particular motives that elicited it and the particular interests and functions it was designed to serve. Individual oral narratives are the verbal acts of particular narrators performed in response to, and thus shaped and constrained by, sets of multiple interacting conditions. As such, they are not the representations of specific, discrete objects, events, or ideas. Every telling (re telling) is produced and experienced under certain social conditions and constraints which involves the teller and the audience. The oral narrative thus becomes a joint telling.

In reconstructed memories of childhood play practices specific positioning of 'girls' and 'boys' within discursive conditions, notably those involving girls in 'caring', 'helpfulness', and 'selflessness' and boys in 'independence', 'adventure', and 'physical activity', can be read as producing, fixing and channelling the desire for individuals to adopt such positionings. This helps to define not only what is appropriate knowledge about play and appropriate regulatory apparatus, but also what received wisdom, culturally based beliefs, folklore, games, toys, rhymes, jokes and so forth, are to become part of the dominant discourse. Yet, in my readings of the oral interviews I undertook, such positionings were, and are, produced through contradiction and conflict, a subjectivity whose 'machinery' is not entirely accessible in the narrative because of the subterfuges of the unconscious.

In an effort to unravel the subterfuges of subjectivity I wish to focus on some of the ways in which individuals are formed and re-formed within a disparate web of state,

social, gender and familial networks. It is to the site of 'the home' and 'the family' I now turn.

## CHAPTER TWO : FAMILIES:- 'FACTS' AND 'FICTIONS'.

'The woman's cause is man's, they rise or sink. Together, dwarf'd or godlike, bond or free'.<sup>1</sup>

'... the crowds and crowds of little children .... Strangely absent from the written record.'<sup>2</sup>

It is always problematic in any discussion of the construct, 'the family', not to slip into an analysis of a mythologised unitary family structure. It is far easier to trace the linear confines of family structures than it is to attempt to understand how individuals come to construct and re-construct themselves within family groupings within 'the home' site. Written historical traces are, of course, silent and present analyses of family 'life' and changing domestic architecture as self-evident. Such 'evidence' typologises perspectives on 'changing family constructions'.

Jacques Derrida could easily have been focusing on the writing of history when he made the following description of the history of writing:

All works dealing with the history of writing are composed along the same lines: a philosophical and teleological classification exhausts the critical problems in a few pages: one passes next to an exposition of facts. We have a contrast between the theoretical fragility of the reconstructions and the historical, archaeological, ethnological, philosophical wealth of information.<sup>3</sup>

The frequent elision and/or silencing of women and children from written histories highlights the enigma of what is their 'place' in historical narrative and how is it written? This chapter focuses on widening the 'interiors' of 'private' experience through spoken, and not just written, 'histories'. In utilising re-constructed memories of 'the home' and 'family life', which reveal the 'public'/'private' dichotomy, this chapter analyses some of the attempts to re-order familialism - with 'mother' posited as a 'privileged agent' of the changing network of power operations and 'father'

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1 Alfred, Lord Tennyson. Cited by Louise Brown, et al., (eds) A Book of South Australian Women in the First Hundred Years. Published for The Women's Centenary Council of S.A., Adelaide, Rigby Ltd. 1936. p.127.

2 Peter Laslett, The World We Have Lost. Methuen, London. 1971. pp.109-110.

3 Jacques Derrida, Of Grammatology, Gayatri Spivak (trans.) Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1976. p.28.

See also Writing and Difference. A. Bass (trans.). Chicago University Press, 1978.

marginalised in domestic relations. The hybridisation of 'public'/'private' family life is evident in interviewees' oral narratives where, within the confines of 'the home', inter-relations with 'father', within this site, are 'swamped' by dominant, over-laying memories of 'mother', which, in turn, posited 'the child' as an object of reformulations. That these changes were not secured without individual dissension is borne out in re-constructed memory. For following Foucault, what is found at the historical beginning of things is not the individual identity of their origins, it is disparity.<sup>4</sup>

It is to the seeming disparity of 'things' of 'facts' and 'fictions' of 'the family', of 'the home' and to the concepts of 'difference' in relation to its members that I now turn. For it is not just the silence and absence of women and children from the written 'record'/'history' that needs to be plotted, but the how of their containment as an effect of difference. For identity is produced through differential relations and to locate women and children in family narrative as lesser or inferior beings, as 'other', implies a notion of a 'norm'. It is within the subjection of bodies to normalisation that conflicts and contradictions are provoked. The containment of 'woman' within patriarchal family structures, within patriarchal narratives, and the containment of 'child', produces a nexus of subjectivities in relations of power which are constantly shifting - at one moment rendering 'woman' (and 'child') powerful and at another powerless.

The distribution of bodies around normalising familial practices is marked, in re-constructed memory, by the conflicts and contradictions experienced in identifying with these new processes of 'identification'. Such reflexivity has rarely been 'charted' by historians of 'the family' and 'the home'. Prior to the 1970s, the study of 'the child' and 'woman' in family history, when such studies were undertaken, has been relegated to the study of 'patriarchal' family history; in particular, the deployment of economic and legal power in the family. The focus on individual experiences within organisations such as 'the family', in its various forms, is a more recent phenomenon. With the increasing historical 'use' of oral narratives, and the development of feminist historiographies, the

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<sup>4</sup> Michel Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History' in Donald F. Bouchard (ed.), Language, Counter-Memory, Practice. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1977. p.142.



relation between the self and others - how one comes to understand his or her world - allows multiple voices to be heard.

This disruption of dichotomies is aptly represented within families with little or no income, where the domestic skills of women were critical in determining a family's standard of living. Most interviewees eulogised their mother's ability to produce a variety of meals from a basic staple, to provide furnishing and clothing from wheat and sugar bags, their endless renovating and re-circulating of old clothes via their sewing skills, and their 'keeping the doctor at bay' by providing the family with a variety of homeopathic and/or patented medicines. In the struggle to keep 'the wolf from the door', in the midst of increasing governmental surveillance of women's space, time and motion, the construct 'mother'/'housewife' was at once 'privileged' and collectively transformed around the distributions of a norm. As 'motherhood' was transformed so, too, was 'childhood'.

It is not just within institutions alone that children learn how to be, how to assign meaning to their experience, it is also within a discursive network of families, friends, kin, and cultural practices such as folk-lore, play, games, toys and so on, that children are circumscribed and individuated. Children also move within and through family structures and practices, movements which coincide as much with the economic lifecycle of the family as with an individual life cycle. In this chapter, some of the 'surfaces' of 'the family', embedding the mother and the child within concentric discursive layers, are explored within the specific contexts of 'space', 'time' and 'place' which give breadth and depth to the manifestations of 'childhood' and 'motherhood'. Wrapped in nature/culture doxas, woman's and child's place in the family narrative underscores that the politics of theory, personal politics and the politics of social change are inextricably entwined.

#### 'Public'/'Private' Dualities:

The emergence of the contemporary Western family form/configuration has been discussed by many researchers, the most complex, arguably, being Donzelot's The

Policing of Families.<sup>5</sup> Donzelot's tracing of 'the rise of the social' in late nineteenth and early twentieth century France has particular relevance for the coterminous significant changing patterns of familial relations in Australia. The problematic and contradictory hybridisation of 'private' and 'public' spheres was underpinned by changes to the material context of 'households', with what Davidoff has termed 'the rationalisation of housework'.<sup>6</sup> Familial reconstitution, along with the emergence of new norms of household management, was to induce new relationships between the 'public' and the 'private'; the judicial and the emergent administrative/governmental technologies; health, hygiene, medicine; and, the family, school and education. The most visible mode of emergence of the social was through the various philanthropic and state sanctions and controls directed at the children (and their parents) of the working class, encompassing their survival, their health, their moral training and education. For Donzelot, the social increased state intervention in society by re-constituting authority relations in and around families.

The emergence of the social challenged, at various levels, the authoritarian patriarchalist model of familialism. The early twentieth century, with its state-sponsored norms of education, hygiene and technical rationalisation, 'witnessed' the increasing hybridisation and interweaving of 'state' and 'family' functions. The 'softening' of patriarchal authority was necessary for the conjunction of state norms and philanthropic moralisation which 'obliged' the family to care for its children or be exposed to, and objectified by, a variety of disciplinary and surveillance mechanisms. 'Morality' and 'normality' was posited as a unitary set of general practices and signalled, according to Donzelot, the emergence of the social.<sup>7</sup> Thus, on the one hand, pauperism and its attendant evils could be eliminated, while on the other hand, validation of hygiene and

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<sup>5</sup> Jacques Donzelot, The Policing of Families. New York, Pantheon Books, 1979. Trans. by R. Hurley. Originally published as La Police des Familles. Paris. Editions de Minuit. 1979.

<sup>6</sup> L. Davidoff, 'The rationalisation of housework', in D. Barker and S. Allen, Dependence and Exploitation in Work and Marriage. London, Tavistock. 1976.

<sup>7</sup> Donzelot, The Policing of Families, p.88.

educative norms was postulated in the name of 'public good'. The development of welfare practices underpinning the increasing 'embourgeoisement' of the family were accompanied by the shift from traditional patterns of extended family with the development of a mobile and urbanised workforce and the consequent medicalisation of the family as a site for intervention and normalisation.

The 'privileging' of 'the mother' in the reconstituted 'family' meant that 'love' was not in and of itself enough for 'modern' mothers; they had to be trained. It was to be scientific training which would ensure correct normalised loving. (The professionalisation of love was also extrapolated for women in relation to work for which they were promoted as being 'naturally endowed', such as teaching and nursing. However, the capacity to 'love' needed appropriate amplification.) The construction of the modern mother was inextricably intertwined with the modern scientific normalisation and regulation of all children.<sup>8</sup> As Donzelot has pointed out, the insertion of psychoanalysis into the practices surrounding the normalisation of the family meant that techniques which had previously been concerned with the poor, now became generalised and applied to all children and families.

What is left out, in Donzelot's account, and which is of central concern for this thesis, is how effectively were such 'norms' internalised and individuated. As pointed out by Adams, the 'effectivity of norms' implicitly assumes that individuals are free to choose to accept their own normalisation, to accept or reject at will whatever normative images are presented to them, be it 'good mother', 'model child' or some other construct. The assumption of choice renders as nonsense the claimed effectivity of normalising apparatus.<sup>9</sup> What is needed then is an explanation of why particular desires are manifested and how particular discourses set parameters through which the 'acceptance' or 'rejection' of choices/desires are produced, regulated and channelled.

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<sup>8</sup> For an interesting elaboration of the historical construction of 'the feminine' see Jill Julius Matthews, Good and Mad Women : The historical construction of femininity in twentieth century Australia. George Allen and Unwin, 1984.

<sup>9</sup> See P. Adams 'Family Affairs', in m/f 7, pp. 3-14, 1982; and 'Mothering', in m/f 8, pp.41-52, 1983, for a critique of Donzelot's analysis of the normative functions of psychoanalysis.

The desire to be a 'good parent', then, can be read as having an historical specificity. Donzelot's account of the 'revalorisation' of familialism can be understood in terms of the emergence of particular discursive practices which produced particular norms and subject positions for men, women and children. What is also needed to be understood is the motivational basis for the synthesis of multiple, and often contradictory, subject positionings. One can argue, then, that an examination of the unconscious is an essential precondition for understanding individual resistances as well as the possibilities for change. Understanding the production of differences can be also read as a political necessity, as the effectivity of regulatory apparatuses, as described by Foucault and Donzelot, depends on the appropriation of production of normative accounts and techniques.

Glimpses of such appropriations are gained in adults' reconstructed memories of their 'family life'. The mythical frameworks common to all societies is evident when individuals talk about 'how it was'. To various extents, 'reality' is transformed, augmented, denied or sublimated. Just as no family life story can be taken a priori to be an 'authentic' account, no appropriations of production of normative accounts and techniques can be taken as a priori. Thus, when Adelene Venables talks about her unhappy childhood, fostered to relatives in Mount Gambier during the Depression, there is a constant need to assert 'I was alright though', 'It wasn't too bad', 'You made the best of it'.<sup>10</sup> Such refraction surrounds every re-memorisation of 'family life' and for the historian it is essential to recognise the mechanisms which gave rise to them. Why does Adelene privilege one telling over another, or multiple others? What does this reveal about the techniques of 'normalised apparatuses' and the 'myths' of happiness, prosperity, desire? Too often, in works such as Donzelot, the collective is privileged in ways which subsume the individual. For the historian it needs to be the reverse. Within oral histories one has the chance to understand that collective myths are 'lived out' in different and unique ways, as one possibility within multiple possibilities, and that nothing is ordained.

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Oral History Interviews (henceforth OHI), Adelene Venables.

### Framing 'Facts' and 'Fictions'

In collecting memories of 'family life', I found it useful to adopt Barthes' 'definition' of myth - a 'system of communication' and 'as second semiological system' which functions through the distortion of the meanings of the signs which it appropriates. 'Myth is a word which has been stolen and given back. Only that the word was not exactly the same when it was returned'.<sup>11</sup> While Barthes' signs are linguistic and graphic, action, too, can be prey to myths, particularly if there is a collective action which puts them at the centre of a system of communication. 'The good parent', 'the happy child', the 'nurturing mother' and so forth can become constructs which - although fantasies - can feed on, and draw life from such mythologemes.

Modes of speaking (and writing) can be read as institutionalised modes whose rules and mechanisms of functioning can be traced in the materiality and practices of oral histories. The text and the images are chains of symbols produced in everyday speech which constitute a bridge between several discourses. The myth of the 'normal child' was/is reproduced in the discourse of children's play, in legal, educational, political and religious discourse, along with the discourse of familialism. In 'reading' oral histories one becomes aware of the semantic interdiscursive elements, the symbols, set formulae, myths, characters and common turns of phrase, and so forth, which form, in their totality, the foundations of ideological representations of a normalised family 'unit', which totalises the partial domains of a society in the purely imaginary, that is figurative, way.

For example, the myth of the bush in Australian culture has been a dominant construct, yet 'families' and 'households' have tended to be signified solely along urban and suburban grids and frameworks. Images of the bush sit somewhat awkwardly with many individuals' recollections of suburban households and their everyday experiences. Images of children's labour are also often dominated by and/or overlaid by bush images of 'helping on the farm', as opposed to 'street' work in the city. In South Australia during the late nineteenth century, it was considered 'normal' for many children across

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Roland Barthes, Mythologies. Paris, Seuil, 1959. p.9.

large sections of the social scale to be inducted into some form of familial labour - be it in the household, in trade, business or working on the family farm. According to the 'facts', the rapid growth of the 1860s and 1870s, associated with the expansion of the agricultural frontier, had declined in the 1880s and was further curtailed in the depression of the 1890s.<sup>12</sup> The census of 1891 (which excludes Aborigines) tabulates a population of 315,212 persons.<sup>13</sup> By 1921 the 'white' population, however, had increased to almost half a million persons. During this period land was opened up for settlement on the West Coast of South Australia, the establishment of the lead smelters at Port Pirie attracted increased growth in the upper mid-north regions of the State, extensive land clearing and settlement was undertaken on Eyre Peninsula, the Murray Mallee and Yorke Peninsula, and small population gains were made in the South-East, the Fleurieu Peninsula and the Adelaide Hills.<sup>14</sup> By the 1920s and 1930s the Murray Mallee was the focus of soldier resettlement schemes along the railway line to Pinnaroo, and on the Eyre Peninsula on the western railway.<sup>15</sup>

From early settlement to the 1920s, more South Australians lived outside of the metropolitan area of Adelaide than lived within its environs. However, by 1921 the number of persons living in metropolitan Adelaide reached 255,375. In that year, for the first time ever, more South Australians lived in Adelaide than in the remainder of the state. At the time of the 1933 census, South Australia's rural population was at its highest ever of 214,762.<sup>16</sup> The expansion of suburbia and the extension of transport accompanied significant improvements, at the turn of the century and in its first decades, in sanitation, living conditions and methods of medical treatment.

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12 See T.L. Stevenson 'Population Change Since 1836' in Eric Richards (ed.) The Flinders History of South Australia : Social History. Wakefield Press, 1986, pp.171-193.

13 See Appendix D, Table D1: Population at census dates, 1881-1933.

14 Stevenson, 'Population Change Since 1836', p.177.

15 Ibid., p.177.

16 Ibid., p.179.

What do these 'facts' tell us about the individuals who inhabited this 'space' and 'time'? Why was it that, by the end of the 1930s, it was no longer considered 'normal' for children to be involved in some form of familial labour, just as it was not considered 'normal' for women (synonymous with 'mothers') to have paid employment? The now-adult sphere of work was mythologised and compulsorily separated from the 'world' of children and a new culturally and historically specific 'private' sphere of domestic familial relations was created, centred around the 'educative' and 'hygienic' needs of children. This shift in familial relations affected the 'interiors' of the household in modes that have often been less documented than in 'exterior' forms.<sup>17</sup> In particular, the role of women in family 'units', and the redefinition, in the twentieth century, of the construct 'housewife', is worthy of closer analysis. From where did this 'desire' to be a 'housewife' emanate?

Carol Bacchi has argued that the relationship between women, home and children was always particularly strong in South Australia, 'partly because its balance of the sexes was more even than elsewhere in Australia, and its marriage rate was consequently higher'.<sup>18</sup> Large families were a feature of the mid to late nineteenth century, and a low proportion of women were involved in paid work. Demographic features altered this situation in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, as an 'overabundance' of women meant that many women remained unmarried, despite the prevailing ideology that this was woman's 'natural' destiny. The depression of the late 1880s also had a dramatic impact on marriage rates. Yet, the ideology of woman's 'natural' destiny - motherhood, as opposed to paid worker - was enshrined in the Harvester Judgement, the 1907 Federal Court decision, which established a basic family wage of seven shillings a day for an unskilled worker who was mythologised as a breadwinner with a wife and three children to support. Those women who did have paid

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<sup>17</sup> See Reiger, The Disenchantment of the Home : Modernizing the Australian Family, 1880-1940. Oxford University Press, 1985, Chapter 1, for an elaboration of this thesis.

<sup>18</sup> Carol Bacchi, "The 'Woman Question' in South Australia", in The Flinders History of South Australia : Social History. Wakefield Press, 1986, p.405.

employment were mythologised as having no dependents and were consequently paid between fifty and fifty four per cent of the basic wage.<sup>19</sup>

The image of domestic, patriarchal bliss was eulogised also. As the Methodist Minister, Albert Stubbs, wrote in a pamphlet, in 1913, dedicated to 'the Young People of South Australia', '...early marriages throw the shield of protection over the sanctity of family life... the cradle rules the world.'<sup>20</sup>

That this ideological construct is ruptured in many oral histories, despite a tendency to eulogise 'home life' by some interviewees, is demonstrable.<sup>21</sup> Many women had to support themselves, many women reared large families in arid settlements without domestic help, and many women eked out an existence in 'homes' that in no way approximated 'a haven'. Yet, as the prize-winning essay in the New Idea's 'Woman and the Commonwealth' competition of 1902 decreed:

Woman's true sphere is her home, and here her queenship may become perfect, her power for good immeasurable. Of her husband and little children she should be a guiding star, and by her high aims and pure example should teach the man of tomorrow, as well as the man of today to love, honour, justice and peace before all things.<sup>22</sup>

As a dominant mythologeme, with its 'promise' of 'quality' and 'love', it remains a male myth which is incorporated, in parts, by females. To a certain extent the myth of 'the nurturing mother' was (is) shared by the reformers and the reformees, and gave them a common language, as Matthews vividly depicted in Good and Mad Women.

During the First World War, the dominant mythology surrounding the sexual division of labour was re-worked to re-establish the traditional stereotype of 'man as the warrior and creator of history' and woman (read as 'mother') as 'the passive flesh at

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19 Ibid., p.408. It is worth noting that the proportion of South Australian female breadwinners at the turn of this century was relatively high - 17.97% of females in the State in 1901 were breadwinners.

20 Helen Jones, In Her Own Name. Women in South Australian History. Wakefield Press, Netley. 1986. p.146.

21 See in particular QHI, Adelene Venables.

22 Reiger, The Disenchantment of the Home, p.61.



the mercy of fate'.<sup>23</sup> Coterminous was the re-emergence of questions regarding 'fit mothers' and 'healthy babies', which 'privileged' women's child-bearing and child-rearing functions yet again. 'The mother of the race' mythology provoked much discussion in the 1920s and 1930s. Debates in the South Australian legislature in the 1920s centred on motherhood allowances, child welfare and child maintenance legislation. Letters to the Register covered a range of matters such as the quantity and quality of the population and the urgent need to provide a large population to hold onto the 'vast areas of unpopulated territory'. That this increase in population must be of 'the right kind' was implicit in parliamentary debates : 'If an allowance were made for each child there would be larger families, race suicide would cease to exist, population of the right kind would be encouraged and it would help to settle materially the present unrest.'<sup>24</sup>

In women's magazines, such as Everylady's Journal, the emphasis was on housekeeping skills and advice peppered with advertisements for household products and appliances. Such discourses reflected and reinforced, and indeed made possible, the prevailing ideology that woman was the primary parent, that early child care was her responsibility, and that paid employment was outside of her 'natural' sphere. The Advertiser, in its regular feature 'Woman's World' weighed into the debate on the 'waste of money training young girls to work when they would eventually marry' by questioning the expense involved in training women teachers and women public servants.<sup>25</sup> With the advent of the Great Depression, women seeking work were bluntly told to stay in the domestic domain and leave the jobs for the men and boys.<sup>26</sup>

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23 C. Shute, 'Heroines and heroes : sexual mythology in Australia, 1914-1918' in Hecate, Vol. 1, No.1, 1975.

24 South Australian Parliamentary Debate, (henceforth SAPD) 1922, p. 692.

25 The Advertiser, 14th January, 1930.

26 See letters to the Adelaide Observer, 25th January 1930; 22nd February 1930; and the Advertiser, 4th February 1930; 5th March 1930; and 21st March, 1930

Domestic ideology underwent a resurgence in the 1930s. Bacchi writes that South Australians were repeatedly reminded that the 'baby is the best immigrant' and that women were told that 'being the loving mother of loving children beats everything else life has to offer a woman.'<sup>27</sup> Infrequent magazine articles on the difficulties of combining a paid job with child-rearing failed to assuage the dominant construct of 'woman' as 'wife' and 'mother'. A 1936 article in the Housewife, headed 'Emancipation', told women that 'There are few thrills in life equal to coming home to a wee girlie and a tiny boy'.<sup>28</sup> Since increasing domestic power was coterminous with the new importance placed on their domestic role, women generally welcomed the 'opportunity' to contribute to public policy and win for themselves some political rights. In doing so, however, even groups such as the Womens Non-Party Association (W.N.P.A.), who campaigned actively for full representation in political activities, discovered that 'women's and children's' issues were considered differently from 'other' 'mainstream' issues of public policy.

While the 'public' life of women did not undergo a radical change in the space of two generations, the day-to-day lives of South Australian women, born between the 1890s and 1930s, experienced considerable change. Not only the architecture of the family home altered, but the architecture of daily life was reorganised with the introduction of sewerage, electric light, gas, the wireless, electric trams and other 'benefits' of industrial capitalism. As Reiger states:

In the period between the 1880s and World War 2, women's traditional chores of cooking, cleaning, sewing and generally servicing the needs of others became redefined as scientific work of national importance ... home and family were being profoundly affected by changes in the material environment, and by the encroachment of industrial upon domestic production.<sup>29</sup>

The dominance of health and hygiene campaigns in public discourses fully entrenched itself in new norms of 'housewifery', where modernisation of the home was the responsibility of 'woman'. Emergent town planning movements allied themselves to

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<sup>27</sup> Bacchi, 'The Woman Question', p. 423.

<sup>28</sup> Housewife, October 1936, p.7.

<sup>29</sup> Reiger, Disenchantment of the Home, p.109.

new hygiene norms by proposing a separation of residential areas from commercial and industrial areas. This reinforced the middle class ideal of a 'scientifically' planned hygienic suburban family living mode where the woman at home was efficiently 'in charge'. The new construct of 'home management' further placed women under professional dominance, wherein the clarion calls for new hygiene norms, based on rational, scientific and functional planning, eventually affected the design and placement of household furniture and appliances which, in turn, brought about a change in women's domestic labour.

As early as 1916, the South Australian Town Planning Association co-initiated a Child Welfare Exhibition Building on North Terrace, Adelaide. Prominent amongst the displays were 'hygienic' displays of milk supplies, local government health measures, information and displays on kindergartens, open air schools and other child-related health and care issues. Talks and lantern slides were proffered by medical practitioners and teachers on a range of issues relating to the education of mothers and the efficient nurturance of their children.<sup>30</sup>

That the introduction of technology into South Australian Homes was a slow development, initially, is demonstrable, according to public and oral discourses.<sup>31</sup> That it was neither a random nor ad-hoc effort to transform the daily architecture of family life and domestic production is also demonstrable. The interlocking preoccupation with the biological functioning of 'the individual' and 'the social' served to 'unify' members of various professional strands. According to Reiger, such 'preoccupations' were contradictory:

...the 'experts' on home and family, while ostensibly promoting the separation of sexual spheres and the privacy of the home, were invading it

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30 The Advertiser devoted several columns to reports of the Exhibition in its November 3rd and 4th issues.

31 For example, as late as the 1930s Ann Barber (née Schocroft), born in 1920 at Spring Gully, Piccadilly, in the Adelaide Hills, recalls her mud brick farmhouse as having kerosene lamps and candles for lighting, no wireless, no clock, no telephone and no copper. 'I think it was mostly kerosene tins on the open fire ... that we used', with 'lavatory facilities ... outside and a removable pan ... and you just dug holes and buried it', with 'all the washing up done in a big bowl - we didn't have a sink ... because there were no pipes to the house (from the bore).' (N.B. Mains electricity did not come to some rural S.A. areas until the 1960s). OHL., Barber.

at every point and demanding that women learn and apply the principles being quite contradictory to notions of naturalness of women's maternity and housewifery.<sup>32</sup>

'Expert' intervention can be read, however, as being congruent with state intervention, and, as such, is not at all 'contradictory'. If one accepts the premise that state intervention was critical in the establishment of the 'normalised' 'liberalised' 'family' then the typifications of 'woman' as a 'natural' mother formed an essential part of, and indeed acted in concert with, the same technical process of familial redefinition. If the new hygienic, social and educative norms were not 'internalised', then, and only then, did contradictions emerge between the 'privacy' of the family and the interventions of the state and professional 'experts'. The emergence of the new construct 'housewife' was dependent on a 'marriage' between 'natural' ability, and 'augmented' technical skills in home management, whose effectivity lay in the implementation of a set of physico-political techniques.

The reconstruction of woman as 'housewife' set up new norms of cleanliness, hygiene and 'individual' behaviour. At one level, domestic life can be read as homogenised and normalised in that it set limits beyond which family members were not 'permitted' to go. At another level, these changes and interventions can be read as not the results, solely, of external machinations but of active participation by family members in the changes prescribed. 'The family' and 'the home' can be analysed as part of a general redeployment of power interests in which a particular form of individual self-interest is integrated with broader interests and made to function in concert with them.<sup>33</sup>

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32 Reiger, The Disenchantment of the Home, p.108.

33 In Donzelot's terms, there is an interplay between increasing state interventions in civil society and the adoption by families of state-sponsored norms of conduct. The 'social', in this sense, is simultaneously the source of individual hopes, desires, dreams and investments AND a 'legitimate' area of state intervention, via the mechanisms of philanthropy, social welfare and so forth. Such forms of power/knowledge are read as transformative and not repressive. Foucault has stressed the positivity of power with its enabling and transformative character:

'The individual is no doubt the fictitious atom of an 'ideological' representation of society; but he (sic) is also a reality fabricated by this specific technology of power that I have called 'discipline'. We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of

### The Little Politics of Family Romances

To move a little closer to an analysis of the politics of 'difference', of differential practices and 'results' of familial reconstruction, one needs to study those discourses/practices by which an individual gives shape to her or his own 'subjectivity'. Recollections of daily family life give form and substance not to some unobtainable 'true discourse' but to what Poster terms 'the little politics of family romances'.<sup>34</sup> It is to reconstructed narrative I now turn in an attempt to discern the individuation of the 'normalised' family and its members.

Paddy Baker (b.1897, in Wolsely, near Bordertown) recalls that his mother (b.1866, near Strathalbyn) '**never worked**' and then develops a narrative of her daily 'chores' on a 50 acre 'workman's block' with '**five or six cows, two hundred or three hundred chooks, pigs, geese, ducks and she used to make the butter**'.<sup>35</sup> Without any domestic help, or any daughters, she worked from 'dawn to dusk':

**She used kerosene tins for many things. We had a big waterhole - she used to walk there and fill them up. She had a yoke across her shoulders and she would walk down and fill the buckets. We (Paddy and his brother) weren't allowed as she didn't think we were old enough or big enough to get the water.... She had wheat bags she used as floor mats ... and bedclothes. Everything was more or less home made.... Mother's chairs were home made, they were cut out of natural timber.... She made her own bread, she was a good cake maker, good pie maker. Everything.**<sup>36</sup>

There were many depictions of 'mother' as the archetypal 'unsung heroine' in the oral interviews. Eileen O'Loughlin (b. Caltowie, 1901) described her mother, Minnie

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him belong to this production'. Foucault, Discipline and Punish : The Birth of the Prison. Trans. A. Sheridan, Penguin, 1979, p. 194.

34 Mark Poster, Critical Theory of the Family. London, Pluto Press, 1978, p.139.'

35 Paddy Baker described a 'workman's block', thus : 'You made application when these blocks came out and he was lucky with what he got. There was some method of allotment'. QHL., Baker.

36 Ibid.

O'Loughlin (née Newman, b. 1882) as '...a real lady. She never yelled or screamed'.<sup>37</sup>

We used to spend our evenings around the fire and she used to read to us. She was a great one for reading, and she had us all reading, too. I always used to say, 'I am getting a bit tired now', and Father would say, 'Couldn't we have another chapter, Mother?' He'd be listening too. The Rosary always used to be said. She would supervise the homework. She wouldn't do it. When you wrote an essay she would read it. She would check our spelling.

As she ironed, anything that needed stitches she would put to one side. She was very methodical.... There was always a white tablecloth on the table. Always. Mother always had the baby on her knee (Eileen was the eldest of six children) and the next one would be in a high chair between mother and father, and the next one would be that side of Father (gestures) and, as we got bigger, we moved further down the table then. They were always up around mother and father, the little ones.

Mother said the white tablecloth was so that we'd know how to behave ourselves at the table, and that we'd be clean. She would always set the tablecloth. Like a lot of them would just have a piece of, er, what would they used to call that again? Soft oil cloths, you know. She said, 'With that you wouldn't be so careful?' And she'd have three of those tablecloths to iron every week!<sup>38</sup>

Eileen's reconstructions of her family life absorbed much beyond the architecture of daily chores. A favourite, much told family story revolves around a 'snobbish' aunt:

They were on their honeymoon, and they went up - they were going visiting all her husband's relations. Her husband was one of my father's brothers. And for their honeymoon they were going from place to place. And they went up to the Larry O'Loughlin's, he was Commissioner of the Crown Lands at the time, and she was telling someone afterwards she was horrified. She said, 'At the Commissioner's table, an Afghan ... came in and Mr. O'Loughlin looked up and said, "Come in and help yourself" so he came in and sat down at the table.' (Laughter) She was about the only snob in the whole family, I think.

Walter O'Loughlin: She said, 'They even had a blackfella', didn't she?

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37 OHL., Eileen O'Loughlin.

38 Ibid.

**Eileen: Oh yes. She said, 'They even had a black-fella'. That was the Afghan, sitting at their table (laughter). It was all the same to Uncle Larry, black, white or brindle.<sup>39</sup>**

So-called 'private memory' and 'identity' is frequently at odds with public discourse. Eileen's 'stories' were rarely solely about an individual. Even though her 'snobbish aunt' features in the previous narrative, she is not the subject. Dominant in her chain of stories, particularly of her life in the mid-north of South Australia, is a reconstruction of life in rural communities where the stories about events or people are always brought together into a sequence on the basis of genealogy, or the locality of the people involved. Her narratives connect with each other because the people involved are either relatives or neighbours, and rarely, as in most public discourses, because the people or events are inherently similar, or through some other thematic connection. The stressing of equality, autonomy and tolerance in the 'snobbish aunt' narrative carried a serious 'political' message for the Irish Catholic O'Loughlins in the mid-north, where life was frequently a hand-to-mouth existence, despite the symbol of the white tablecloth. While individual 'tales' do form part of the re-telling, the subject of the stories is utilised by Eileen to primarily sort out and map genealogies and identities.

The 'breakup' of kinship and family and its reconstruction in the twentieth century is frequently presented in public discourse as a process in industrialisation, leading to atomisation, disintegration and, with that, to individualism. Yet, according to oral histories, the extent of this loss of 'belonging' has often been exaggerated, as the shape of the tale depends on personal and collective factors. While there is a common temporal thread about the work 'mothers'/'housewives' performed - 'Monday - washing day, Tuesday - ironing day, Wednesday - mending, patching, cleaning' - and so forth, there is not a common thread to what it meant (means) to be 'a woman', 'a housewife', 'a mother' or 'a wife', because this would presume a mythical unity of consciousness. Glimpses are available when sons and/or daughters tell stories about their mothers, but frequently this is more illuminative in wrapping up other events in a single story, which 'best' 'captures' the essence of the story-teller's childhood experiences. Consider

Eileen's epic story on taking her mother's 'responsibility' for the baby, when needed.

She was aged six years when the following event took place:

I generally had to mind the baby - look after the little one.... I suppose I'd be sent in to put in the baby's dummy, in his mouth, if he was crying. And I'd be sent in too, if I was playing and the baby was crying and mother was busy. I used to rock him to sleep. I can remember I was very annoyed one morning. I don't know what I was doing. I was called in to mind Frank (her baby brother). You see, our mother was very busy. She didn't have a girl (a domestic) at the time, to give them (the farm hands) their dinner. And she called out to me to come and rock the baby to sleep. He was in one of those wooden cradles and I'd a pair of lace-up boots, and I remember as well as can be that the top was undone (on the boots). And I'd have my hands on the laces like that (gestures) and I'd kick the cradle and have it going for a while, and I'd be pulling it (the cradle) backwards and forwards with the laces. And all of a sudden I saw a snake walking across the middle of the room. And I called out to mother, and there was the snake there. And she sent me down to the shed to tell father. And father came up ... and the snake got away. And mother said she didn't sleep that night. She was walking around looking in our beds every now and again to see where the snake was. Anyway they got it the next morning and killed it. And that was that. A big long snake.<sup>40</sup>

The family ethos of the O'Loughlins was service, duty and responsibility expressed in myriad shapes and forms. The story of the snake is a significant one for Eileen as it represented a near catastrophic 'dereliction' of duty. The imagery of responsibility is so strong and dominant in Eileen's life that she continued to care for an invalid sister, Dolly, until her sister died. She 'kept house' for her parents until their death, and then 'kept house' for an unmarried brother, Mick, until his death, as well as taking care of another widowed brother, Wally, until his death. At 87 years of age she reflected 'That's what's wrong with families now. They never have responsibility. Mick and m'self always had responsibilities. And as we grew up, we had to keep little ones out of mischief, 'cause they wouldn't know any better.'<sup>41</sup> While Eileen's narratives reveal how she constructed herself as 'the dutiful daughter' it also tells us, albeit obliquely, about her mother's 'internalisation' of her various subject positionings.

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40      ibid.

41      ibid.



Oral evidence about household labour, and the gendered nature of the work involved, depicts a complementarity myth underpinning dominant familial ideology, until well after the First World War. Comments such as **'It was never thought of women working outside the home, it was just taken for granted the way it was'** and, **'That was the normal procedure'** were reiterated in varying forms by most interviewees.<sup>42</sup> Woman was the right hand of man! Marilyn Lake, in The Limits of Hope, succinctly delineated the ways in which women were constituted as an unpaid reserve army of labour on soldier settlements in Australia in the 1920s - the bulwarks of society.<sup>43</sup>

Yet, many of the women interviewed questioned the 'natural' order of woman's life as one of service and deference. Elsie Wheaton (b.1911), when talking about her mother's voting 'habits' said:

**It didn't make any difference to her who was in and who wasn't. But that's how it was at home, mum never knew anything about it. She couldn't have cared less about it. I suppose dad told her what to do and she did it.**

**Like it is now - you are down on the bottom of the rung - women, in my opinion, are second rate citizens in a lot of cases. It's alright for you (gestures to her husband) you're not that way, and I don't think dad was either, but mum was a different type of person to what I am. Her job, she thought, was children and home and that was it. And in her opinion dad kept her and if he said to her 'You vote that way', then she did. She thought that was the right thing to do. But she didn't know anything else.<sup>44</sup>**

What becomes fascinating in Elsie Wheaton's narrative is that despite the vehement censure - 'women ... are second rate citizens in a lot of cases', she emulated her mother in internalising the myth that a woman's essential being is in her 'motherhood', the supreme purpose justifying her existence. Threaded through her own stories are accounts of abrogation, sacrifice and protection:

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42 OHI., O'Loughlin. Wheaton. See also, Noonan, Kenny, Dutton, McLean, Williams, Clarke et cetera. An exception was Coralie Green, discussed below.

43 Marilyn Lake. The Limits of Hope. Soldier Settlement in Victoria 1915-38. Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1987.

44 OHI., Elsie Wheaton.

I do know this much, and I have been of this opinion all my life - money is secondary. Money is nothing. You could have all the money in the world and still be miserable. You have got to make your own happiness. I used to say to Brice (her husband) the only thing I would wish if I were a fairy, when my children were born, the only thing I wished upon them would be to have common sense. I think so many people lack commonsense. Beauty doesn't matter. Being rich doesn't matter, but if you give a person common sense they will cope with most things. And I found that out and I reckon it's right.

...Disobedience ... there's no discipline of any description (today). My dad told me - he used to say to me 'You train a plant as you want it to grow'. That's what he said about children. If you want them to behave properly to train them, teach them. And that's all we have done.<sup>45</sup>

This internalisation was not monolithic, though, Elsie was actively involved in reconstructing it in her consciousness - the justification of limited economic resources, the 'making' of happiness, the denigration of 'beauty', the need for 'discipline' and 'proper' growth provide an interweaving of the material, the psychical and the semiotic lived in present memory.

With the surge to establish new hygienic norms of household management and temporal regulation, along scientific rationalist lines, the new construct, 'schoolchild', and, in turn, their mothers, were targeted for normalisation. That this reconstruction was not always welcomed was evidenced by women, such as Kathleen McLean, (b.1898) who related:

I went to Unley (High School) for about two and a half years (c.1912 to 1914). Then they bought a cottage next to the school - and they had domestic science. And we used to have to take something to wash ... all that sort of thing! I had enough of (doing) that in the school holidays. Then we learnt cooking.

Margaret: Was there a big emphasis on the girls to do cooking and learning to sew and other such things?

Kathleen: Yes. Laundry was on Monday. Mum said, 'I can teach you more about laundry. You can come home Monday lunchtime and help me Monday afternoon'. Well, that went on alright for a few times, then it was noticed I was absent every Monday afternoon. So I got called up over that. I don't know whether Mum came into it but they said either I must come to school on Monday, or not at all. I told Mum about it and she must have thought it over. And she said, 'Alright I will send

you to Muirden College'. So I didn't go back to Unley (High) School.

Margaret: Did she (your mother) think you were wasting your time?

Kathleen: Yes, she did ... that I could learn from her all that had to be done.<sup>46</sup>

Kathleen's mother, according to Kathleen, believed that girls' education should be 'as good as the boys'.<sup>47</sup> For Mrs Greenham (Kathleen's mother), who had been a seamstress, Kathleen's office job, and later her work as a Post-Mistress was a source of family pride. It was not, however, a source of pride to have her ability to teach Kathleen housekeeping skills called into question.

Few 'overt' resistances to 'experts' incursions into the daily rites and rituals of the household, are readily documented. As with most matters of health and hygiene, 'folklore wisdom' often prevailed in contrast, or in tacit 'harmony' with the new medico-hygienic norms. Epsom salts, licorice sticks, Heenzo for colds, eucalyptus leaves, mustard plasters, camphor in a bag, and burning sulphur 'for a disinfectant', were just some of the numerous home remedies interviewees recalled.<sup>48</sup> However, for German members of the community, homeopathic medicines were (are) an important part of their culture, and attempts to alter the production and usage of various herbal remedies were deeply resented. When the father of Arthur Schubert died in 1916, in Tanunda, in the Barossa Valley, there was a great deal of suspicion among the non-German residents as to the cause of his death. Amplified against the backdrop of World War One, demands were made for an inquest to be held, pending the results of an autopsy. The Schubert family and their pastor strenuously denied claims of poison, reiterating their right to have administered homeopathic medicines. With the local newspaper mounting a campaign to 'make these people bow to our laws', the local authorities came to

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<sup>46</sup> OHL, Kathleen McLean. (Muirden College is a Business College in Adelaide.).

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ann Barber recalled 'One of Mum's biggest things around the house, any diseases or anything, she would burn sulphur... put the sulphur powder in a lid or something like that and then set fire to it and it would burn and fumigate the house. But you wanted to be sure you weren't too near it because the fumes of it could be overpowering!' OHL, Barber.



claim the body. The Schubert family hid the body under a sofa, after they removed Mr. Schubert's organs and placed them in a bucket to be disposed of elsewhere.<sup>49</sup> The significance of this reconstructed narrative transcends 'family' boundaries to represent the struggle the German community of Tanunda, and elsewhere, had to preserve their own cultural norms, behaviours and beliefs, the struggle against 'alien' forms of power/knowledge. In the re-telling, David Schubert has presented this 'resistance' as an on-going dialogue.

For most of the interviewees, resistance to 'changes' formed only a small part of their conscious discourse. Some, like Coralie Green, wryly commented on the attempts to exhort women to be 'thrifty' in their housekeeping duties. Detailing the efforts of her father to grow vegetables and fruits, keep a cow, hens, and snare rabbits to help offset his frequent unemployment during the Depression, she said, simply : '**There was nothing we could cut down on!**'<sup>50</sup> Most households, other than those of the gentry, operated some form of barter system, utilised the back-yard to grow produce, kept some type(s) of livestock and demonstrated great resourcefulness when situations demanded - such as the sinking of wells in suburban back-yards during the severe drought of 1914. It was ironic, then, that some of the much vaunted new technology often increased the difficulty of working-class households to manage their wages 'efficiently'.

For example, where fire-wood had been gathered in plenty, the connecting of gas and electricity to homes meant that payment of fuel accounts became an extra item to be borne by the household. The rationing of goods and services in the First World War, and its aftermath, also increased costs at a time when wages effectively declined and unemployment increased. In the census of 1911, 2.69% of the population was listed as unemployed in South Australia. In 1921 the figures had risen to 5.31% of the population, while, in 1933, a massive 28% of the 'working' population was listed as

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49 Private discussions with David Schubert, author of Kavel's People, who related this story about his grandfather, and to whom I am indebted for a copy of a taped interview with his father, Mr. Arthur Schubert. Newspaper reports of the time are held by David Schubert.

50 OHI., Green. (In an untaped discussion, following Interview I.)

unemployed.<sup>51</sup> While these statistics do not reveal a detailed breakdown of the pattern of unemployment, they do depict rapidly changing social conditions. In 1933, according to Hancock and Richards, the basic wage in Adelaide was 59 shillings and twopence a week. However for those on sustenance, the South Australian Government was amongst the least generous of all states. A single man on sustenance got five shillings and threepence. This was two-thirds of the rate paid in Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania, and eighty percent of the New South Wales rate.<sup>52</sup>

In 1914, the average weekly working time prescribed in state industrial awards was just over forty-eight hours for males and forty-nine hours for females. In 1939, the average weekly working time had been slightly reduced to forty-four hours for men and women. The employment of women in domestic service had collapsed by the outbreak of the Second World War but had been paralleled by the increase of women's employment in retail trade, commerce and in the professional sector, particularly nursing and teaching. Women's employment in the manufacturing sector changed very little from the beginning of the twentieth century to the 1930s.<sup>53</sup> What these statistics mask is the individual efforts of women's labours, particularly their effort to contribute both domestic and productive labour at 'critical' times, such as their husband's unemployment. The fact that their economic labour continued to revolve around the domestic sphere, or in local jobs or in small businesses that were marginal to the mainstream economy, meant that their husband's status as breadwinner - potential, if not actual - was not undermined in the public domain. As Aungles writes:

This accommodative response to the Depression meant that women's economic contribution was largely devalued and rendered 'invisible'...this accommodative character of the families' response to the economic crisis of the Depression was a major factor in maintaining social order in a period of potential unrest.<sup>54</sup>

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51 South Australian Year Book. 1986. Chapter 1.

52 Joan Hancock and Eric Richards, 'Wealth, Work and Well Being : Some historical Indicators.' The Flinders History of South Australia. Social History. p.594.

53 See Appendix D, Table D2 : for a detailed breakdown of these employment categories.

54 Anne Aungles, 'Family economies in transition : Adelaide women in the Depression'. M.A. Thesis, Flinders University of South Australia. 1982. p.vii.

Thus, women could still be held solely responsible for the efficient organisation of their households, despite the eddy and swirl of 'public' discourses and events. Just as diseases, such as the Influenza epidemic of 1918 and 1919, and outbreaks of tuberculosis, were the subject of much 'public' discourse/'practice', the 'management' of disease and illness, in the first decades of this century, was frequently left to the individual household - that is the woman 'in charge', or if she was sick, to relatives and/or friends.<sup>55</sup> Thelma Williams' mother, Mrs Johnson, 'had very bad health, and in my young days I lived at various times with aunts and my grandmother while my mother spent fairly lengthy periods in hospital, especially during the war years' (First World War).<sup>56</sup> Thelma described her family set up as 'totally different from what you find today':

We lived on one end of the street (Gawler Avenue, Welland South), my grandmother lived across the road, my uncle lived two houses down, practically 'cross the road from my grand mother. Another aunt lived in the next street and two streets away my uncle lived. And my aunt, who eventually lived two streets away from me, her husband went to the War - they at the time were only renting a house - and because my mother was so ill, she came and lived with us. Brought her two children. And men were only paid a small amount for going to War in those days. It was a kind of pooling of resources. My mother was then able to keep the house (built in 1909 at a cost of 435 pounds) which cost eight and fourpence per week from the State Bank to buy. And when my mother was in hospital, naturally my aunt helped bring me up.

Then occasionally, to give her (the aunt) a rest, because she had two children, if my mother was ill I went to live with my uncle who lived across the road from my grandmother. And when they got tired of having me I lived with my grandmother. So, although I was taken from my home and brought up by other people, I still was only within a stone's throw. I wasn't isolated. My mother was still there and when my mother was ill she would come and live with my grandmother, too. So the family had a continuity.<sup>57</sup>

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55 For example, the Northfield Infectious Diseases Hospital, later renamed Hampstead Centre, was not opened until 1932.

56 OHI., Williams.

57 Ibid.

The management of children's illnesses and contagious diseases placed yet another strain on the efficient management of the home and household. For families living in rural areas, the strain of nursing a sick child and preparing a 'specialist diet', was particularly onerous. Elizabeth Noonan was aged eleven, in 1911, when she contracted diphtheria, whilst at a boarding school in Caltowie, in the mid-north of South Australia:

**Elizabeth:** I was sick for a long time. I got diphtheria. I was still going to school and I got paralysis, and I couldn't get out of bed because I couldn't get my feet working.

**Margaret:** How long were you in bed?

**Elizabeth:** Six months. My mother looked after me ... she was pretty careful (of me). I didn't go into hospital. I could stay home because the rest of the house was curtained off because the others weren't allowed to come in where I was. They used to come round to the window and talk to me.

**Margaret:** How often were you seen by a doctor?

**Elizabeth:** He used to drive out (to the farm), Dr. Aitkin, fifteen miles from Jamestown. He would always come and see how I was. Once they knew what I had, and what had to be done, well, he didn't come that regular. But if he was out that way at all, he always called. He was a Scots doctor. He used to come in a buggy and two horses. She (mother) paid him for his visit.

**Margaret:** So, if your mother was spending so much time with you - how did the rest of the house get looked after.

**Elizabeth:** She did that as well.<sup>58</sup>

The isolation was particularly stressful for many rural women during times of family illness. Eileen Said, who lived in Monteith, in the Murray lands, recalls the alienation of her irrigation settler community (which her family, the Connells helped pioneer in 1909) from medical aid, or, at 'best', being at the mercy of its few practitioners:

**It's so remarkable - you know, if a doctor was called to the settlement. The news just went from one end to the other. It would cause quite a stir. If anything went wrong with us, mother seemed to be able to look after us. The doctor, Dr. Steele, who came after the old one, was in Murray Bridge. Usually, someone used to have to get on a horse and ride up - that was before the telephone came in. It didn't happen very often ... he would come by horse and carriage.**

Well, there was an outbreak of diphtheria and you know Anne (sister) and my brother and I ... the three of us suffered diphtheria. Not together, one after the other. But the whole settlement had it. In one family, there was six in the family, and three died in three weeks. And there was only one old doctor in Murray Bridge, an old Scotsman, but he was very obstinate. And he had a disagreement with the Board of Health, and do you know we missed school for twelve months. There was only just a few left at school, because he wouldn't give us a certificate to go back to school. He wouldn't issue one because he said there was a carrier. I don't know that he did anything about finding out who was the carrier, but my mother fought very hard with that. She was really the backbone of trying to get us back to school. We used to have a sheet almost draped in some terrible disinfectant in between the rooms - it was terrible. And ... we had the injection which soon cleared it up. She was really a very good nurse. But he made us miss twelve months of school.<sup>59</sup>

What Eileen most remembers is the denigration of her mother's nursing skills by the doctor, who initially charged her mother with the responsibility of nursing the children and then resented her interference in his professional domain when she insisted that her children be certified as free of the disease.

While it is obvious in Elizabeth and Eileen's cases that their mothers understood the need to isolate and immunise their children while they had diphtheria, which illustrates that new bio-medico-hygiene norms were being adopted by many women, other women relied on the ways of their mothers.<sup>60</sup> In many of the suburbs of Adelaide, paying for a doctor's visit was often financially out of the question so the Children's Hospital was used in emergencies. Superstitions were not always allayed by medical intervention, however, as Len Ellis recalls:

**We had a horse in that paddock and they used to throw the grass over the fence for us. My brother and I went and got it in a hand cart. He was pulling the cart and I was pushing, and the horse in the paddock came after the grass. I was kicked by that horse in September, and my younger sister was ten years younger than me and she was born on Christmas day and she had a mark inside of her face. It (her mark) was because it was such a shock to my mother to see me. All that side of my face, teeth knocked out, three were knocked out and put back**

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59 OHI., Said.

60 The O'Loughlin family received an exemption from vaccination certificate in 1913 on the grounds that Mrs O'Loughlin believed 'what that needle puts into you, God only knows'. OHI. O'Loughlin. In 1909, 52% of children were unvaccinated. By 1939 the number of vaccinated children had increased to 78%.



in. They took me to the Children's Hospital. I was in there a few weeks of course. They fixed me up. Put the teeth back in - the three front ones. The rest of it was just get over it yourself.<sup>61</sup>

The management of children's health and hygiene was eventually deemed too important to leave solely in the hands of 'mothers'. As early as 1909 a consulting physician to the Adelaide Hospital, R.S. Rogers, examined 1,007 children aged from seven years to fifteen years attending government schools. His criteria for 'healthiness' were not always 'scientifically rational'. For example, one criterion was complexion, of which he wrote:

...the proportion of rosy cheeked children is satisfactory ... the maximum percentage are reached in the ages of 9 to 12, whereas the lowest percentage are to be found at the ages of 13 to 14...the compulsory school going age of 7 is marked by a low percentage of ruddy complexions and a relatively high percentage of pale faces.<sup>62</sup>

The sting, of course, was contained in the summary:

It is possible that many of these children enter school from poor and insanitary homes, and that the improved conditions of the school go far to counteract the devitalising influences of their home life.<sup>63</sup>

Rogers opined that 'the superiority of the country children ... over the metropolitan is quite as marked in cleanliness of body as ... in cleanliness of clothing'.<sup>64</sup> Country children were heavier than those of the city, according to Rogers, but 'thin children largely predominate in this State ... the great majority of these children were wiry, active and strong, of fair muscular development, but with no superfluous fat'.<sup>65</sup> Despite these early findings of relatively fit, healthy children, Rogers' examination was taken up by educators, hygienists and reformers as 'proof' that children's nutrition and

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61 QHI, Ellis.

62 Public Records Of South Australia : GRG. 18/8 (henceforth PROSA) R.S. Rogers, 'Report on the medical inspection of one thousand pupils attending the public schools of South Australia in 1909'.

63 *Ibid.*, p.9.

64 *Ibid.*, pp.10-12.

65 *Ibid.*, pp.16-20.

health care must be managed along scientific lines as the health and wealth of the nation lay in their hands.

Details of children's diet, clothing, hygiene, sexual conduct and play habits were increasingly subject to state intervention after the First World War. The type of dwellings children lived in were gradually increasing in size and permanence, despite the decrease in family size. By 1933, two-thirds of 'homes' had at least five rooms, and sixty-four percent of houses of that time were owner-occupied, with fifteen percent of flats and tenements similarly disposed.<sup>66</sup> Home ownership was lauded as the cornerstone of society and, as such, required an upgrading of 'home making skills' as a duty to the state. For 'working class' women this included an added 'public' responsibility of 'keeping the right moral tone' in the home. Along with more efficiently planned dwellings, the normalised household was expected to utilise properly-designed and 'laid out' rooms, along with their scientifically designed apparatus, in a manner that distributed the appropriate number of bodies most effectively. The habit of placing several children, of mixed sex, in the one bed was a practice that was decreed as neither morally or physically 'hygienic'.<sup>67</sup> Children's 'health', it was warned, must be superintended at all times. As one South Australian medico pointed out:

Before us lies the opportunity to make our nation the healthiest in the world. And the means of achieving this are not difficult. Give our children proper training in the simple laws of clean living, aim to cultivate sound minds in sound bodies, give care to the order and beauty of home life - little more is necessary, for the secret of national health lies mainly in right living.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Hancock and Richards, 'Wealth, Work and Well-being', p.606.

<sup>67</sup> Oral discourse appears to challenge the notion that girls and boys slept together. Most, like the following anecdote, reveal that care was taken to place sleeping children separately, to the point of parents not sleeping together. James Porter recalls: 'When we had the whole family, there was three of us at the top of a double bed and three of us at the bottom. The heads' be different, see all our feet'd be in the middle. Of course the girls used to sleep with Mum. The other lad, he used to sleep on the couch I'd think, or something, but we all got in this big double bed. Kick each other a bit and cause a bit of strife so Mum'd have to come in and quieten us. (laughs) Still, marvellous what you get through on'. S.A. Speaks.

<sup>68</sup> Rieger, Disenchantment of the Home. Cited from a speech given by Dr. Southwood at the South Australian School of Political Economy. Australian Archives, C.R.S. A1928 item 155/17/1.

In the quest for the efficient and effective 'mother/housewife' archetype, many activities relating to the feeding, clothing and nursing of children underwent radical change. Buying in products and services replaced many 'traditional' household tasks for many women. Bottling ones own preserves, pickling meat and eggs, making jams, sauces, chutneys, baking bread, scones, tarts and puddings and so on, could be replaced by goods bought from stores and/or delivered in suburban and most rural areas. Technological increases in keeping food cool also changed some labour patterns by the start of the Second World War, even the time-consuming rituals of labour on washing, laundry and ironing days was being overhauled. Flat irons, charcoal irons, 'Mrs Potts irons', laundry props, washboards, washing in forty gallon drums over an open fire, and other time consuming labours were overhauled by new 'labour saving' devices. Increasingly women became alienated from domestic production, with commercial substitutions altering patterns of domestic production and consumption. The cries of 'Rabbio, Rabbio' and other delivery noises became less frequent in the streets.<sup>69</sup>

As the hours spent on household labour diminished, mothers were exhorted to spend more time focused on their responsibilities to their children. Beyond feeding and clothing, there was an increasing call for mothers to play with their children and become more involved in their children's out of school leisure time. Curbing children's tendency to 'roam' the streets could be managed if the appropriate toys and games were made available for 'home play'.<sup>70</sup> With falling birthrates, and increasing home sizes, the privileging of children in the family unit became a central preoccupation of child 'experts' and reformers of the early twentieth century. Coterminous with the normalising of household production and reproduction was the massive reordering of childbirth and women's struggle for control of their bodies.

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Len Ellis recalls 'The rabbit man would come round every week - sixpence a pair - with them hanging on the back on the cart and he'd pull up "Rabbio, Rabbio" and out you'd go. And he'd skin it and chop the head off - sixpence a pair. You had to cook it straight away. You couldn't keep fresh meat'. QHL., Ellis, Circa, 1918.

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These developments are more fully discussed in Chapter 7, below, as is differential familial responses.

Of those people I interviewed, who were born prior to the nineteen twenties, all were born at home or in a relative's home. Many could recall stories told about their birth, the name of the midwife present and/or the doctor if, indeed, a doctor was present.

Eileen O'Loughlin's narrative is representative of many women's management of childbirth and early child-rearing in the first decades of the twentieth century:

**Every one of the children was born at home and mother never had an anaesthetic. Never had an anaesthetic in her life.... Sometimes the midwife wouldn't get there. Father went up and got old Mrs Ryan - they lived about a mile up the road - she was father's auntie, and she would come down. And I think one of her sisters was always there. And then father went off to town to get Mrs Kitson, she was an old midwife who'd come. And old Davey (the farm labourer) went once to get the doctor.**

**I don't know what all the fuss is about now. It's only natural. It's only a natural process. She always stayed in bed a good twelve days afterwards. She always slept with the baby on her arm. The baby and the next one always slept in the same room as our parents. So there was always two in the room.... None of us was weaned before we were twelve or maybe fifteen months old. And then she would have the baby sitting on her lap at mealtimes. (She'd) Start with the gravy and then a little bit of mash potato, and took it from there. She'd put a little bit on her finger first and then she'd use a spoon. She always did that.<sup>71</sup>**

While many of the interviewees who were born in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century could talk at length about the aftermath of the birth of siblings, very few were formally informed that a birth was imminent. Kathleen McLean recalls coming home from school for lunch one day to be informed by the girl employed to help in the house, on a daily basis, that she had a baby sister. Kathleen replied, '**don't have a sister**' and was adamant that the girl was obviously wrong. On being told to ask her mother, Kathleen discovered her newly-born sister, Laurel, propped up in her mother's bed. '**I got such a shock, I forgot to ask my mother how Laurel got there! And, do you know, I never ever did**'.<sup>72</sup>

Many oral narratives also focused on the 'mysterious' appearance of babies, with only two of the younger women interviewees volunteering information on the audio tape

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71 OHL., O'Loughlin.

72 OHL., McLean.

about menstruation. Some women, like Kathleen McLean, were happy to discuss their complete shock and fear at experiencing their first menstrual cycle, but only after the tape was turned off. The pervasive silence encompassing sexual/bodily 'functions' continued in many reconstructed narratives to be mythologised.<sup>73</sup> Some of the more inquisitive interviewees, like Thelma Williams, understood that you **'weren't supposed to ask any questions about such things (reproduction), but you would come to your own conclusions anyway.'**<sup>74</sup>

That childbirth was hazardous for many women was experienced first hand by many of the interviewees. Veronica Sladdin recalled the long illness of her mother, after the birth of Veronica's younger brother, at their home in Clare, in the mid-north of South Australia, in August, 1909:

**Mrs. Reynolds (a midwife) officiated at my brother's birth, and something went wrong. Something happened and they had to have two trained (nursing) Sisters in the house for six weeks. And dad used to refer to 'That dirty old midwife', and that was old Mrs Reynolds. I used to know where she lived. The doctor was at James' birth, Dr. Otto Wein Smith, too. She (Mother) had septicemia, you see.**

Margaret: What did they do for it?

**Veronica: One thing they did, they bled her at the ankle ... but they've got different methods, now. ...When I was about five (after Jim's birth) she had surgery for hydatid (sic) (A cyst containing tapeworm). Nobody knew how she got it, or where or when. And she was operated in Calvary (Hospital, North Adelaide), the original Calvary, and I came down with her. And I stayed with these cousins on Gilbert Street (Adelaide). The doctor at Clare was very savage with my dad because dad didn't want old Otto (the doctor) to do it. He wanted someone special to do it because it was a big operation. I used to go and stay with her at the hospital, and when she finished there she went down to St. Margaret's, at Semaphore, and I went too. I stayed down there (at the hospital) with her, too.<sup>75</sup>**

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73 This is discussed more fully below, in Chapters 7 and 8. It needs also to be stated that the terms of agreement for interviewing was that the major focus was on their 'childhood' and that many of the men and women reconstructed 'childhood' as a time of 'sexual innocence'.

74 OHL, Williams. Thelma went on to add that she was frequently wrong in her conclusions!

75 OHL, Sladdin, née Scales.

Traces of mutual dependencies and effects exist in Veronica's discourse, between emergent social scientific discourses on health and hygiene and administrative practices regulating women's hospitalisation for normalised health care. In Veronica's father's request for 'someone special', that is, someone 'expert', to operate on his wife, lies one of the many small points of mutual dependency, and of concrete instances, of the increasing interdependence of the medico-biological experts (and practitioners) and the 'population'.

By the early to mid 1920s midwives had to become registered by the State, in South Australia, a move that had been strongly advocated by the School for Mothers since its formation in 1909, who, themselves, had opened the first babies' hospital in Australia at St. Peters, in 1915.<sup>76</sup> From 1926, renamed as the Mothers and Babies Health Association, this organisation widely disseminated information across the State, visiting individual homes and/or health centres, utilising radio broadcasts and setting up special 'baby health trains', to traverse rural regions. In 1937 the Association published The Australian Mothercraft Book which represented the views of several Adelaide medicos, and a masseur, on a series of health management issues from treating red-back spider bites to the necessity of three to four hour feeding schedules for infants.

While not all of these 'laws' were adopted by many families, their very advocacy provided conditions for the further emergence and production of a specific bio-medical discourse in relation to 'mothers' and 'babies'. Childbirth practices, for non-Aboriginal women, had demonstrably changed by the end of the 1930s. The 'normal' procedure was for women to be 'hospitalised' in some form of nursing home for ten to fourteen days where birth was managed away from women's previous, and traditional, female support system. Asked why they thought such changes, from home births to hospital/nursing home births, had 'come about', most interviewees responded along the lines of 'better medical care' and 'more hygienic' lines, with some noting that stillbirths and early

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For elaboration on the role of the School for Mothers, see Jones, In Her Own Name. pp.166, 168, 170-172.

infancy deaths declined with the 'advent' of hospital births.<sup>77</sup> Along with other coterminous ideological notions of rationalising housekeeping roles and duties, the construct 'mother' was undergoing major changes in relation to pregnancy and child-birth. Such changes, as I previously stated, were often contributed to by women themselves who did not wish to die in child-birth, or have too many dependent children. But this is not to minimise in any way that child-birth became increasingly annexed by the medical profession and joined the ranks of other surgical procedures. For younger interviewees, child-birth became a medical event, as opposed to a natural event.

While the rites and rituals of child-birth and child management changed radically in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the format of family entertainment within the home changed, arguably, the least - although the family was exposed to new technology such as electricity, gas, wireless, the automobile, the moving pictures and the telephone during these 'decades'. Molly Dutton (b.1896) recalls a manner of family entertainment that was still being experienced by many of the interviewees who were born twenty to thirty years later - that of playing cards, ludo or singing around the piano on a Sunday night when **'the furniture used to be pushed aside and we used to dance in the old dining room'**.<sup>78</sup> While many houses were not as large as Molly Dutton's in Mitcham, similar rituals of Sunday 'singalongs' were experienced across class groups and by most urban and rural children. Some noticeable exceptions to Sunday family amusements were children living in households where their parents held religious beliefs which precluded the playing of cards and/or singing and dancing on the Lord's Day.<sup>79</sup>

William Burns (b.1905 at Parkside) recalls family song nights when:

**My mother would play (the piano) and my sister (elder) was a very good pianist, and she was a very good singer ... and my**

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77 While some women, like Elizabeth Noonan and Jean Sudlow, commented on their desire to have had more than one child (Mrs Noonan had a daughter and Mrs Sudlow, a son) most gave economic reasons for not having large families. No interviewee volunteered any information directly on matters of contraception.

78 OHI., Dutton.

79 The differential observance of the 'Sabbath' is discussed in Chapter 4, below.

father was a good singer. And as I told you I could sing before I could walk. (We'd sing) The old ones - in the First World War, we'd sing all those war songs - Pack Up Your Troubles, Long, Long Way to Tipperary. Before that we'd sing the songs that were in fashion at the time.... We'd have musical evenings in those days.

Margaret: How would they go?

William: Friends would come along and sit around the room and you'd have everyone joining in. As a kid I learnt elocution. I would say my piece and then somebody would sing and somebody else would recite. That's how the entertainment was then - no television.<sup>80</sup>

Reconstructions of memories of Sunday meals with friends around, bread and dripping from the Sunday roast, the Catholic priest calling in for his regular Sunday lunch, relatives visiting, listening to the Sonora gramophone and 'making your own fun' dominate interviewees narratives, except from those interviewees whose home life was described as 'strict'.<sup>81</sup> Along with the memories of cleaning spoons, knives and polishing the floors on Saturdays, are tightly held memories and much repeated stories of a mother's or father's kindnesses or special deeds.<sup>82</sup> Jean Sudlow fondly recalls :

Talking about summer time - we had no air conditioning or electric fans or anything like that. We had hand fans. Well, when it was very hot mum and dad would bring the mattresses off the bed, wire mattresses, (and) put them out in the back yard. She even had sheets on the line to keep the moon from shining in our faces. Mum would be up and down all night changing the sheets around. That used to happen quite a lot.<sup>83</sup>

Relationships with parents and siblings are problematic categories but are obviously central to the interviewees reconstructed memories of their family life.<sup>84</sup> Dominant in the reconstructed accounts of family life, of household production, consumption, reproduction and rituals is a belief by the interviewees that somewhere in their narrative lies a point of certainty, of knowledge and of truth. Yet, such

80 QHI., Burns.

81 QHI., Ellis; Sudlow; O'Loughlin; Clarke and Green. For more rigid observances of Sundays, see QHI., Schubert; and Venables.

82 QHI., Tonkin.

83 QHI., Sudlow,.

84 This discussion is elaborated in Chapters 7 and 8, below.



mythologemes work to obfuscate the changing discursive positionings of women (and children), for example, in relation to medicalisation practices, to their reproduction capacities and their sexuality. According to bio-medical discourses, 'mothers' are reconstructed not as passionate lovers of their children but as 'rational' care-givers who monitor the health, hygiene and safety of their offspring - a sanitised, hygienic mother. The 'rational' construct 'housewife' and the 'rational' construct 'mother', in bio-medical discourse, conjoin to share a similar search for self-understandings in reflections obtained through service to others and the State.

Yet 'mothers' are neither totally powerful nor powerless, regardless of the archetype presented. All 'subjects' are contradictory and, as such, one's positionings and repositionings are fragmentary and momentary. Family forms and relationships are not to be read, then, as rational and unitary but as signifiers that every practice is a production. Thus, when Thelma Smalley reconstructs the news of the impending 'arrival' of her baby sister, her narrative can be read as a re-producing of power relations whose day-to-day practices and meanings contributed to the maintenance of her gendered subjectivity:

**I don't think I knew what was going to happen.... But Mother was not very well for about three weeks before my sister was born, and I asked her what the matter was. And I said, 'Have you got something the matter with your stomach?' And she said, 'Yes. You are going to have another baby brother or sister'. I didn't know. I didn't know which end they came out of!**<sup>85</sup>

As with Thelma's account of her mother's impending labour, all the interviewees reconstructed memories of 'family life' reveal that practices and meanings have 'histories' which are articulated and developed through the lives of the individuals concerned. Interviewees' investments of discourses can be read as socially constituted and constitutive of subjectivity, which - for every individual - results in the production of multiple meanings and choices.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> OHI., Thelma Smalley.

<sup>86</sup> The 'taking-up' of gendered positionings is analysed in Chapters 7 and 8, below.

The Shifting Focus on 'father'.

Just as 'the mother' was accorded a 'new status' in familial relations, the position of 'the father' was re-aligned in the changing network of power relations. The juridically absolute power of the father was 'softened' in favour of the mother and children. In the nineteenth century, most children had worked either directly for their fathers or had contributed wages to the family economy. By the 1930s the father-child relation had been re-defined as a purely educative and social one. Nineteenth century family forms were accorded a different community 'value' than those in post-World War II South Australia, in that there was an explicit ranking of families and individuals in both their 'public' and 'private' lives by their 'peers' in the small group(s) of people(s) with whom they mixed, be it a rural town, an Adelaide 'area' or suburb. The number of horses owned, or the size of one's allotment, or involvement in one's church group as an elder or lay minister, all were sources of ranking men and their families. Nineteenth century forms of the family frequently functioned as a unit of production, whether in farming, shops or other retail ventures, or trades such as tanning and brickmaking. The separation of children from both paid and unpaid work constituted the changing constructions of the patriarchal relations with which we are familiar in the twentieth century.

While interviewees frequently privileged their mothers in re-constructing their childhoods, fathers were not rendered invisible unless they had not been physically present within the family household.<sup>87</sup>

In many cases interviewees spoke of 'close bonds' with their fathers. For some, like Veronica Sladdin, it was a case of necessity that she spent a lot of time with her father, due to her mother's illness and her position as eldest in the family. Her father was a mail contractor and operated a coach and pair from Clare to Blythe, and return.

Margaret: What jobs did you have to do?

**Veronica: I was the eldest. I had to help with the horses. I was the man about the place. I had to help Dad ... round up the horses and chase the horses and the cows and do all sorts of**

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87 QHI, Venables; Simpson.

jobs. We bought our wood long and we used to saw it up. We had one of those things you put the big log in - its like two logs in the ground and it comes up like that (gestures) the log sits in it. And we had what we call a cross-cut saw. I would be one end and dad the other. I had to do all that sort of thing.

Margaret: How old were you then?

Veronica: Right from the time I could even squeak. Then dad used to chaff his own hay - make chaff from it. The hay cutter was set up on one of these blocks on top of the hill and he had two horses in it (strapped to it) and he used to feed the hay into it (the cutter). That was too dangerous (for Veronica) so we had to ride the horses round and round (to operate the hay cutter). I used to have to feed the horses and the cows. We use to eat the chaff until the mouse plague came (laughter). And Saturday mornings Dad used to rip open the chaff bags and stitch them all up and make a big rig and he used to put them all down in the shed and we had to clean all the brass on the harness and on the coach. He used to do the straps but I had to clean the brass.<sup>88</sup>

For others like Coralie Green and Patricia Fitzpatrick, who were much younger than Veronica Sladdin, it is the affective side of their relationship with their fathers that they privilege. Coralie's narratives about her father, particularly during his times of unemployment, provide a great deal of information about daily rituals.

Coralie: My father, I think, thought he was the better cook, and I think my mother probably went along with that because he was a baker, a pastry cook. I think when he was there he would cook but when he wasn't there, she would do it. He generally wasn't there for breakfast because he would go to work early. I am not sure about tea time. But Sunday lunch my father always did.<sup>89</sup>

Later,

Coralie: ...When my father lost his job, with the last money he got he bought a cow. We had an acre of land and fruit trees and he had a really good vegetable garden because he had come from a farm. He used to make butter and once he made cheese.<sup>90</sup>

Coralie described her father's efforts to grow gherkins in the Depression and sell them at the Jam Factory, and of his growing 'pumpkins, beans, marrow, spinach, cabbages, tomatoes - all of those things'. She posited that 'It was a question

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88 QHI., Veronica Sladdin.

89 ibid.

90 QHI., Coralie Green.

of necessity but also it was a question of pride for my father'. 'This was his way of managing during the Depression. Buying a cow with the last of his money. He was going to be alright, he had this big piece of land and he could grow things.'<sup>91</sup>

In re-constructed memory, Coralie depicts her father as more of a feminist than her mother, who was active in various campaigns on behalf of women. It is intriguing to follow Coralie's narratives about her relationship with her father because it posits that the social constructs of 'masculinity' and 'masculinism' are as in need of historical investigation and elucidation as the constructs 'femininity' and 'feminism'. In reading the ways in which Coralie's father formed and re-formed himself during his mission work, his Union work, and his unemployment, to name but a few critical events, allows one to observe the workings of 'masculinism' as a distinct, dichotomous historical political position. It also serves to reaffirm that biologism does not inform the lived experience of 'masculine' subjects. Men, too, are historically constituted 'sexed' subjects whose 'investments' and desires are observed in their multiple subject positionings.<sup>92</sup>

The 'home' and 'the family' as a site of contestation, and therefore as a site of the production of images, social practices and constructions, discourses and psychic representations of meanings, is central and critical to a reading of gendered childhood positionings and practices. Within oral narratives, based on reconstructed memories, one can understand, correlatively, the successive thoughts, actions, images and feelings of the interviewees insofar as they present a certain directedness. As a listener/participant, at no stage could I predict or deduce a narrative's 'conclusion'. Always/already a thousand possible contingencies are presented prior to a narrative's 'end'. In discussing, extrapolating, analysing and presenting a story of 'home life', and of 'family life', the interviewees concluded their narratives not with a predictable 'end' but an acceptable conclusion. For them, as well as for me, there was an expectation that,

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91 Ibid.

92 This argument is taken up, below, in Chapter 7.

upon reflection, the interviewees could describe that the ending to their story required those sorts of events and actions which they chose to describe. The ability to 'look back' is made possible by the teleological movement directed by our expectations when we tell and follow the narrative. To comprehend a narrative it, at some stage, must be judged as 'acceptable' to both speaker and listener.

In the re-telling of narratives of 'the home' and 'the family' one gained a sense of 'retrieval' of the interviewees most fundamental potentialities, as they are inherited from 'the past', in terms of a personal fate and a common destiny. Constant repetition of our 'life stories' is perhaps, ultimately, an attempt to establish human action at the level of 'authentic' historicity. It is within the Morphology of the Folktale that Vladimir Propp first focused, within Russian folk tales, on the model of an heroic quest.<sup>93</sup> In these folktales, the hero (always male) meets a challenge which he is sent to overcome. Throughout the quest, the hero is faced with a series of trials which he victoriously overcomes through confrontation. Implicit within these folk narratives is the circularity of the imaginary travel, a sense of 'timelessness' in which the quest itself duplicates a travel in space that assumes the shape of a return to the origin. It is evident in all of the interviewees' narratives that there is a similar element of a 'trapped', encapsulated voyager. All of them re-told of various childhood and familial 'initiations' or quests which had to be overcome. For some, like Coralie Green, it is symbolised by her sense of 'shame' at having to play the violin on a Sunday night in Rundle Street at her parents' street mission and hoping her class mates would not see her. For others, like Thelma Williams, it is encompassed in her story of 'the stranger' who 'exposed himself' to her while she was on her way to Sunday School, provoking feelings of fear, disgust and abandonment which remained palpable in her re-telling.<sup>94</sup>

The 'hearth' and the 'home' exert a considerable psychical 'hold' on re-constructed memory. Like some form of mythical Labyrinth, interviewees were constantly involved in a quest to 'break out' and search for, and return to, their

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93 Vladimir Propp, Morphology of the Folktale. Austin, Texas, 1968.

94 See QHL, Coralie Green. Full transcript contained in Appendix A; and QHL, Thelma Williams.

metaphorical and geographical roots. The maze of 'events' from birth to present age (and imminent death) were frequently narrated as a journey - a journey which, in memory, could be returned to temporally. A circular travel in space from the 'exterior' to the 'interior'. Memory brings us back, in a sense, to the myriad potentialities of 'self' that the narrative retrieves. The myth of Ulysses and his quest for Ithaca - and himself - is an important one for all human beings. For like Ulysses, we too are all involved in the search of the 'essence' of ourselves, and so we travel back to our 'homeland' to 're-discover' who we are.

For most interviewees, 'home' and the 'family' are represented in the structure of their narratives as a mythical point of origin and a mythical point of departure, a form of mythic centering, a paradigm of 'Odysseus' travels in which Ulysses' voyage was a voyage towards the centre, towards Ithaca, that is, towards himself. Time and again the myth of Ulysses is employed in various forms, either consciously or unconsciously, by the interviewees to describe the recapturing of one's emotional 'homeland' - a journey of 'rediscovery' to establish one's identity, that is, who one was. Yet, there is never an acknowledgement that if one does find one's 'home' again then one becomes a new being - not who she/he was, but who she/he is. As Ricoeur has stated:

Memory, therefore, is no longer the narrative of external adventures stretching along episodic time. It is itself the spiral movement that, through anecdotes and episodes brings us back to the almost motionless constellation of potentialities that the narrative retrieves.<sup>95</sup>

The 'end' of the 'story' for many interviewees is what equates the present with the 'past', the actual with the potential. The emphasis is on the teller, that is, the hero; the hero is who she/he was!

For most of the interviewees, the notion of 'who was I then?' and 'who am I now?' embraces questions of 'how did I become this man/woman?' 'how do I know myself?' Just as Ulysses journeyed towards his sense of be-ing, the interviewees' narratives can be read as a journey towards the self. But as Ulysses discovered, the morpheme 'man' and 'woman' is never identical with whom one 'is'. As Derrida noted, the copula 'is' is

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Paul Ricoeur, 'Narrative Time', in Critical Inquiry. Autumn, 1980, p.186.

always as a supplement.<sup>96</sup> Be-ing is a highly complex process of inscription and naming, and of embodiment. Is it any wonder that the emotional 'home land' is mythologised by many who, like the King in Alice in Wonderland, believe that in one's life narrative, 'one can begin at the beginning ... and go on till you come to the end; then stop'. 'Facts' and 'fictions' supposedly become immutable in the retelling, yet they are an intimate fabrication, a catachresis without a literal message. Understanding of the self comes about not from journeying to one's own Ithaca, but from studying a matrix of social and discursive practices. To the extent that these practices turn out to vary historically, 'self-understanding' will vary as well.

The shifting boundaries between 'public' and 'private', 'interior' and 'exterior', became readily apparent in the early twentieth century with emergent bio-medical objectivations of the 'mother' and the 'child'. Just as 'woman's' 'natural functionings' were increasingly brought under medical surveillance, the 'child' in 'woman's' care was to be 'modernised' and 'normalised'.

Superintending children's time, space and motion was viewed as critical by many child experts. Movements away from the supposed all seeing gaze of the mother were to be increasingly monitored. One of the first sites of intervention, outside of the home, was on the streets. It is to these attempts to 'control' the streets, and the bodies in them, that I now turn.

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<sup>96</sup> See J. Derrida 'The Supplement of the Copula : Philosophy before Linguistics' in Margins of Philosophy. Trans. by A. Bass, Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1982. pp.175-205.

**SECTION TWO : NARROWING 'EXTERIORS'.**



### CHAPTER THREE : CHILDREN IN THE STREETS

'And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.'

Zachariah, viii 5.

The 'reconstruction' of familialism connected with the emergent twentieth century bourgeois 'family' involved, to use Donzelot's term, 'protected liberation'.<sup>1</sup> Within the normalised, sanctioned, insulated and specially constructed home site, the child, like a hot-house bloom, would flower in a liberated, yet discreetly supervised, atmosphere. The child of the proletariat, however, according to the ideologues and child savers, suffered from an excess of liberation. He, and to a different extent she, must be restrained from spending too much 'free' time in the unsupervised and 'morally dangerous' space of the street. Integration into the social order was to require 'supervised freedom', particularly of popular play sites. Between the two poles of protected liberation and supervised freedom, the marriage of private initiative and state intervention was to achieve its ultimate integration with the formulation and development of the public playground.

Prior to fully compulsory education in South Australia, in 1915, the visibility of young people on the streets was of increasing concern to reformers. The model of a dependent childhood within the safe confines of a schoolroom, as proposed by educators and others, was under threat from the practices of unsupervised youth. Writers in the South Australian Education Gazette were moved to portray such youth as posing a threat to the 'survival of the race'. Their independence and self-reliance was categorised as 'delinquent' and the streets were categorised as the 'Devil's Nursery'.<sup>2</sup> Bolstered by the support of the State Children's Council, formed in South Australia in 1886, which

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<sup>1</sup> Donzelot, in The Policing of Families, Pantheon, New York, 1979 utilised two models of childhood, protected liberation and supervised freedom, within a broader analysis of contract and tutelage. While an elaborated discussion of such concepts remains outside the scope of this thesis, the different social relations encapsulated in the register of private initiative and free contractuality (of the bourgeoisie) and the involvement of the state in the intervention and neutralisation of family authority (the tutoring of the proletariat) offers one an interesting model for reading through the emergence of 'individualistic' notions of 'normalised' childhood in the twentieth century which frequently fell somewhere between these two opposing models.

<sup>2</sup> South Australian Education Gazette, (henceforth SAEG) August 1905, p. 141.

vigorously pressed for compulsory full time attendance for all children 'during the dangerous years from ten to fourteen'<sup>3</sup>, liberal educators increasingly focused on urban working class youth. That this concern had developed for some length of time is attested to by newspaper reports, such as the following:

There are boys playing all day long in the lanes and streets, and down by the banks of the Torrens, who ought to be at school. And there are little girls kept at work or sent out as nursemaids who should be receiving an education.

...Too many parents indulge in the habit of keeping their children away from school on trifling pretexts, and it would not be by any means an evil if the streets were cleared of children during school hours...<sup>4</sup>.

The 'cult of larrikinism' in the late nineteenth century, which attracted vehement condemnation<sup>5</sup> was subsumed in the growing fear of 'street children' by the early decades of the twentieth century.<sup>6</sup> Various referred to as 'urchins', 'gypsies', 'arabs' or other equally colourful variants, such typifications expressed reformers' fears that working class children were too readily, and too early, exposed to the worst excesses of the street - vice, in the myriad shapes of prostitution, alcohol, crime and so on. Such premature exposure to moral and physical danger could be 'solved' if child labour was curtailed in favour of more extensive, fully supervised, schooling in classroom sites.

This chapter seeks to examine the differential effects of the moves to take children out of the streets and place them in a classroom, or in other specially constructed sites,

<sup>3</sup> Kerry Wimshurst, 'Street Children and School Attendance in South Australia 1886-1915', M.Ed. Thesis, Flinders University, 1975, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> The Register, 15/7/1884, p.4. An editorial on 'The Compulsory Clauses and the Schools'.

<sup>5</sup> Wimshurst, 'Street Children and School Attendance in South Australia, 1886-1915', p.213.

<sup>6</sup> The term 'truancy' (or 'truant') was utilised in the period after the 1915 Education Act but it was later subsumed in the all embracing term 'delinquent child' which came into widespread use in the nineteen twenties and nineteen thirties. For a detailed analysis, see P. Cashen 'The Truant as delinquent: the Psychological Perspective, South Australia, 1920-1940.' Journal of Australian Studies. No. 16, May 1985.

such as the public playground. A reading is provided of the attempts to control children's time, space and motion and, as such, is illustrative of the larger moves for social control and the control of bodies; a 'technology' from without that would penetrate the 'soul'<sup>7</sup>. Children of the late nineteenth century were increasingly subject to a whole range of micro-penalties of time - lateness, absence, interruptions of tasks; of activity - negligence, lack of 'zeal', inattention; of behaviour - disobedience, impoliteness; of speech - insolence, idle chatter; of the body - lack of cleanliness, incorrect attitudes, irregular gestures; of sexuality - impurity, indecency.<sup>8</sup> Implicit in the management of children's street play and behaviour was an ethos of managing both the mind and the body, simultaneously.

Street play is, of course, an urban phenomenon and it must be stressed that it was the urban young, and not rural youth, who were of prime concern to reformers, educators and legislators. The bush habitat of country children was accorded differential treatment. The family economy of the farm was taken into consideration when education attendance requirements were framed and implemented. While country children were expected to absent themselves from school in particular seasons, to plant and harvest crops, city children were labelled as 'truants' if they similarly absented themselves from school. Urban irregular attendance was to be policed assiduously, despite the 'legitimacy' of the reason.

The street children campaign, it is argued, did serve as a 'successful' demarcation of the realms of work, school and play, between childhood and adult life; yet, the continued presence of children playing and doing 'jobs' in the streets before, during and after

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<sup>7</sup> Both Kerry Wimshurst and Ian Davey have commented extensively on South Australian street children, child labour and school attendance during this period, which, also with Margaret Barbalet's works on state wards, provides a broad analysis of attempts to control children's time, space and motion.

<sup>8</sup> Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison. Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1979. p.178; Oral History Interviews, particularly Kathleen McLean, Elizabeth Noonan, Frank Noonan, Molly Dutton, Paddy Baker and Eileen O'Loughlin who commented on the gendered restrictions on their behaviours and practices in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

educational compulsion, simultaneously served as an important site of social resistance to the curbs on children's time, space and motion. Children continued to bargain and trade with their treasures; to gamble, cheat, taunt and insult friends and foe alike; to tell jokes and riddles; and, to play games and show off their home-made toys. Despite the massive physical relocation of the bodies into the classroom and the school playground (after the 1915 Education Act), as well as the emergence of 'public playgrounds', urban children continued to structure, to a remarkable degree, well into the twentieth century, their lives around the lore of the streets - their giant playground prior to the advent of the motor vehicle (which proved an unlikely ally for the child-savers).

### The Street Children Campaign

It is important to distinguish the relationship between the child-saving movement, known as 'The Street Children Campaign' (1880-1915), and larger movements of societal control. Amongst these movements was the regulation of bodies in time and space, the control over reproduction of the population, the restraint of the 'interior' of children's bodies through disciplines, and the control over appearances.

The shift from child labour to compulsory education, as a result of the tightening of school attendance regulations in South Australia, was perceived as pivotal in 'ameliorating' the 'inadequate' working class socialisation practices. Resistance to the new hygiene and education norms carried with it the threat of the loss of family autonomy in favour of state supervision. That this 'campaign' was waged exclusively in urban locations owed much to bourgeois child-savers' typifications of 'the poor'. The myths of rural fortitude reified in the pioneering spirit, were regarded as a 'natural' bulwark against pauperism and vice. Indeed, Reports of the Destitute Board, Reports of Commission on the Destitute Act and newspaper commentaries in the late nineteenth century highlighted the corrupting and degrading effects of the urban environment on the children of the poor.<sup>9</sup> Such stereotyping

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<sup>9</sup> Typical findings, such as 'the pauper element is rarely found in small outlying or newly settled areas' cited from The Annual Report of the Destitute Board, Year ended 30/6/1882, p.10; and, 'The tendency of pauperism to develop faster in town than in the

'necessitated' differential enforcement of the compulsory education clauses in the city as compared to the country, as irregular school attendance was viewed as an urban problem. The 'blame' was sheeted home to the 'disorganised' households of the poor.

Wimshurst traces the initial involvement of such bodies as the State children's Council, in education reform, as stemming from their involvement with the 'uncontrollable' truant children admitted to the industrial school.<sup>10</sup> Bolstered by police 'reports' of 'a rising tide of juvenile depravity', the Council was instrumental in the introduction of various child protection laws.<sup>11</sup> The controls on children's time, space and motion ranged from a curfew between 8 p.m. and 5 a.m. in winter for children under thirteen (9 p.m. to 5 a.m. in summer) to age limits on selling racecards at the racecourses and collecting bottles for marine store dealers. The employment of children in shops and factories under the age of thirteen was prohibited by the Shops and Factory Bill of 1893, which simultaneously restricted the hours of work to forty eight hours per week for children aged thirteen to sixteen years. Subsequent amendments allowed differential hours for rural areas.

The introduction of the State Children's Amendment Act of 1900 gave the Council an unprecedented 'right' to legally proceed against 'incorrigible' children if, and when, the parents refused to do so. By 1909, further legislation specifically empowered the Council to deal with children over such matters as being found in brothels, with or without their parent(s):

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country is strikingly illustrated.... During the last five years the cases of outdoor relief have more than doubled in Adelaide and the suburbs, and they have increased nearly 50 per cent in the last two years' cited from The Report of Commission on Destitute Act, South Australian Parliamentary Papers, 1885, vol. iv, no. 228, p.xxi, are illustrative of such negative stereotyping.

<sup>10</sup> Wimshurst, 'Street Children and School Attendance in South Australia, 1886-1915' pp.17-24.

<sup>11</sup> The State Children's Act of 1895 delineated a 'neglected child'; The Gaming Act of 1897 and the Marine Stores Act of 1898 delimited child casual labour; and The Children's Protection Act of 1899 placed a curfew on children under thirteen. See, Wimshurst, *ibid.*, pp.28-59.

(The Act) included as neglected children those under fourteen who habitually frequented public places in the evening, or, if under sixteen, who were found in liquor outlets; it extended privacy to affiliation cases and, even more startling, provided for the compulsion of males to give evidence and for the court to accept hearsay evidence in such cases; it extended the supervision of foster mothers and the children in their care (usually illegitimate) till the children were seven years old; the Councils officers were to have power to enter premises in search of neglected children, to impose corporal punishment, to have guardians fined for neglect of children, and to authorise formal non-subsidised adoption of state children.<sup>12</sup>

The emergence of the South Australian Public School Teachers Union in 1896 had ushered in new voices clamouring for the removal of children from the streets. Irregular attendance was of 'professional' and pragmatic concern.<sup>13</sup> The 'moral' reordering of children's lives demanded their regular presence within the omniscient gaze of the teacher. Allied to the burgeoning interest in child welfare was the Labor Party's interest in the assumed nexus of education and economic progress, underpinned by imperial sentiments, eugenic notions of 'national efficiency', and alarm at the upsurge of German growth and productivity.

With the election of Tom Price as Labor Premier of South Australia in July 1905, and his assumption of the education portfolio, the former secretary and current president of the Public School Teachers Union, Alfred Williams, was appointed as the first Director of Education in South Australia in 1906. The street children campaign was of mutual concern to both men - a concern that culminated in the Education Act of 1915 which enshrined a dependency model of childhood. As Davey cogently outlines:

For children, it had the effect of tightening the boundaries between school and work at the same time that it lengthened the school age child's day as work and family responsibilities had to be squeezed into the hours before and after school. For parents, it meant that they lost the right to control the use of their children's time, as the state unambiguously asserted its power

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<sup>12</sup> Brian Dickey. Rations, Residence, Resources: A History of Social Welfare in South Australia since 1836. Wakefield Press, South Australia, 1986.

<sup>13</sup> See Miller, Long Division: State Schooling in South Australian Society. Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 1986, p. 193, and Wimshurst, 'Street Children...' pp.99-100, for a discussion of the dual concern for increased professional status by teachers and the regular attendance of children in class.

to determine the nature of childhood experience. The aim of the 1915 Act was to reproduce the social order, in a more 'scientific' and 'efficient' manner....<sup>14</sup>

Although the Act was aimed primarily at the working class, its effects encompassed, in an unprecedented mode, a wide-ranging transformation of not just 'education', but familialism as well; it altered the location of the individual, within new forms of administrative and legal authority, which ushered in the discursive conditions that made possible the birth of the 'normalised' subject.

This new notion of the subject - 'schoolchild' as opposed to 'streetchild', revealed little understanding of the lived reality of those children who did inhabit the streets.<sup>15</sup> It revealed even less of an understanding of the web of economic exigencies and cultural factors associated with children's reasons for being on the street. But then, visibility rather than actual deeds was at the heart of the 'concern'. The importance of the casual work and earnings of children was rarely appreciated by those concerned to 'save' children. James Porter, who was born in 1899 in the Adelaide suburb of Hackney, is a case in point. At the age of eleven he worked every school morning and night for two to three years prior to leaving school, to support his widowed mother:

... of a night we used to sell these evening papers and we used to get threepence a dozen for selling them. On a Saturday afternoon we used to sell race cards and we used to get sixpence a dozen for them, because they were dearer than the papers. The old Express and Journal ... We used to sometimes earn enough selling papers to buy ourselves a pair of boots now and again.

We used to go down to the bakehouse before school. We'd grease a few tins and then they'd give us breakfast and we'd be off to school. Then after school we used to come back to the bakehouse, climb up in the wood loft, throw the wood down, carry the wood down and put it in the furnace for the bakers to heat the oven up. Then we used to grease the tins and that and they used to give us bags of stale cakes to take home. And we used to get half a crown a week for that.<sup>16</sup>

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14 Ian Davey, 'Growing up in a working-class community : School and work in Hindmarsh' in P. Grimshaw et al., Families in Colonial Australia. Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1985 p. 172.

15 This new construct, 'schoolchild', is elaborated in Chapter 5 of the thesis below.

16 S.A. Speaks. An Oral History of Life in South Australia before 1930. James Porter OHI/20. The Mortlock Library of South Australiana.

James, like many others, employed considerable ingenuity in mixing the demands of school and labour. In school holidays he picked peas for tuppence a kerosene tin full, caught yabbies in the River Torrens and sold them for bait, for tuppence a dozen, sold the leeches that stuck on his legs, while 'bathing down the Torrens', for a penny each to the Adelaide Hospital (R.A.H.) and, on Saturday afternoons during the year, he earnt half a crown for spreading peanuts on trays ready for roasting, at the Central Market.

In rural areas, children were similarly called on to supplement the family income. Almond picking, helping fetch the animals to the weekly stock markets, and unpaid help on the farm, with harvesting tasks for boys and washing and house cleaning chores for girls, accounted for much absenteeism. Illness and accident in the family, or 'hard times', also accounted for some children's non-attendance at school. Seasonal variations affected school attendance in urban and rural schools alike.<sup>17</sup>

With the implementation of the instrumental machinery for compulsory education, however, a transformation occurred in that a large part of 'childhood', urban and rural, 'middle class' and 'working class', was to be 'spent' in specially constructed age-graded institutions wherein the moral and physical well-being of whole populations would be secured through the moral supervision of individuals. The battle, by children, for their own public space, the world of the urban streets and, to a lesser extent, 'the bush' had been 'officially' lost, according to public myth.

### The Lore of the Streets

The world of the streets is best reconstructed by those who inhabited them, in different places and at different times. The street symbolised, in myriad forms, a free space for children; a space away from the superintending gaze of those adults who wished to have, or did have, authority over them. Largely unconcerned about contemporary debate over theories of 'work' and 'play', many children grabbed the opportunity to 'make a few

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<sup>17</sup> See Wimshurst, 'Street Children...', pp.130-157.



bob' and 'muck around' as well. For all the participants in the realms of the streets, it was an entry point into the world of childhood, a complex world that largely operated in antagonism to the world of adults. For many, the streets represented the first moves out of the house and its yard into the world beyond its domain.

The lore of the street taught children how to interact with each other. Rule-bound, the younger members were initiated, along a continuum of ease and pain, into the myths, knowledges, customs, practices, beliefs, values, and normative behaviours which operationalised this 'world'. Girls and boys quickly learnt with whom they could play, what and how they could play, and when they could play. The 'why' of play remained unwritten, part of a culture which was, and still is, 'passed on' from one generation to the next.<sup>18</sup>

The streets in Adelaide, and its immediate environs, are unanimously recalled by those metropolitan residents I interviewed, as well as others, as being 'pretty free of traffic' and 'great places to play'. Even in busy streets near the city children managed to play. Molly Conry, born in 1913 at her parents' house in Margaret Street, North Adelaide, recalls playing in O'Connell Street, North Adelaide, a major thoroughfare for city traffic, in the 1920s:

(There were) Horses and carts going up and down. We used to be able to play in the middle of the road after certain times when people went home from

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The 'why' of play, while not of great import to the 'child players', has been of central concern to many writers. Piaget's discourses on play provide a fascinating reading of the way children's play practices became an object of study, an object of science and an object of pedagogic practice. The natural phenomenon of play was relocated in intellectual terms of activity, experience and play; this offered the possibility of reading children's spontaneous (play-like) exploration of objects as spontaneous creation of scientific rationality: 'For the young child, a rule is a sacred reality because it is traditional, for the older ones it depends on mutual agreement.... The game of marbles, for instance, as played by boys, contains an extremely complex system of rules, and the essence of all morality is to be sought for in the respect which the individual acquires for these rules....' Jean Piaget, et al., The Moral Judgment of the Child. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1972, p.12. If children were to be provided with the conditions for spontaneous activity, play, then, must become a centralised pedagogic device. It is in this sense that Piaget proposed that a naturalised approach to the development of a scientific rationality could be best understood. (The pedagogisation of play is taken up below and in Chapter 6.)

work. It was full of children the whole way right along, playing games up there 'till tea-time.<sup>19</sup>

With large tracts of Park Lands surrounding the city, children had ample grounds to play in which provided safety from street hazards. In the surrounding suburbs, 'bush' land remained uncleared adjacent to many houses, until as late as the 1940s. Children who lived near beaches annexed the many kilometres of sandhills as play venues, while some children shared their nearby vacant paddocks and blocks with grazing cows and horses. A semi-rural existence held sway only a few kilometres from the inner city of Adelaide. Ross Morcom recalls billy cart rides to Glenelg beach, circa 1912, and calling out 'Blackies, g'day blackies' to Aborigines camped in the dunes near the foreshore.<sup>20</sup>

A close-knit sense of community identity was shared by many inner suburban dwellers, with many interviewees recalling all the names of household occupants, not just in their streets, but in adjacent streets as well.<sup>21</sup> Friendships formed in childhood with someone from the same street frequently became life-long friendships. 'Growing up with the suburb' was frequently alluded to by interviewees and many continued to live in the same suburb after marriage, or moved a few kilometres to an adjacent area.<sup>22</sup>

For rural children, the 'main' street, or streets, of their town were not, for many, as accessible as their urban counterparts'. Opportunities to meet were usually of a more

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<sup>19</sup> City of Adelaide Oral History Project. Interview with Miss Mary (Molly) Conry, 28/9/1988. Conducted by Elizabeth Harris. Vol. 1 of 1, p.13.

<sup>20</sup> S.A. Speaks, Ross Bishop Morcom. OHI/11. p.16

<sup>21</sup> Oral History Interviews, (henceforth OHI.) Williams; Sudlow; Venables; Clark; Kenny; McLean; and Ellis, in particular.

<sup>22</sup> Thelma Williams and Jean Sudlow are a case in point. Living in adjoining streets in Hindmarsh, (Jean from birth), they met when Thelma, aged two years, returned from Perth to live, in 1910, in Hindmarsh, where her father had been born, as had Jean's father. Family friends, they attended Hindmarsh school together, shared the same Church activities and built their first, and only, marital homes a street away from each other in the new suburb of Allenby Gardens, when land was subdivided in the early 1930s on the 'borders' of Hindmarsh. They remain 'best friends'. OHI., Williams, Sudlow.

organised nature. Horrie Simpson recalls the excitement in Oodnadatta when special events were held in the town:

**At the end of the year they used to hold a week's race meeting and people used to come from all the stations around, bring their horses in and all their kids - the grown ups would go to the concert and of course the kids would put on a concert.<sup>23</sup>**

In more populous country towns, the streets were, infrequently, places to stop and stare into the shop window and covet the lollies and other goods. Most country interviewees do not recall dawdling in the streets to play as it was expected that they would go straight home to help with the various chores. Play was usually in their own yards, or friends' yards, if there were houses close by, or in nearby creeks, paddocks, hay stacks, dams or whatever presented itself. Activities were often given special names, based on contemporary heroes. Douglas Murrie, born in 1899 in Georgetown (in the mid-north of South Australia), recalls 'blonding' along fences and falling into creeks:

(We'd do) What they called blonding. Blondin - the fellow that used to walk the tightrope (over the Niagara Falls). Well, you walk along the top of the fence and balance on the top of the fence, and that was our favourite pastime. Because there was a lot of those slip rail and post fences and you'd walk along these fences and - blonders, we used to call them - blond along the fence.<sup>24</sup>

The opportunities to move beyond the gaze of adults were arguably greater 'in the bush'.

Perhaps this sense of closer supervision accounts for the frequent retellings of 'run-ins', with adults, that many city children love to recall. Contestation of adult boundaries and sanctions frequently assume mythical proportions:

James Porter: I remember one incidence. (sic) You remember the old gas lamps they used to have in the streets? Well this chap used to come along. The gas lamps were pretty high and there was an arm on that, and there must have evidently been a pilot light in them. And he used to go along on his bike with this big stick hook, hook it down and set them alight. One day, I thought, 'Hell, I can do that too'. So I followed him after he got out the street, (sic)

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23 OHI., Horrie Simpson.

24 S.A. Speaks. OHI/29. Mr. Douglas Gordon Murrie. p.15.

and I used to get a stick with a nail on it and pull them out. Somebody seen me. They reported it and the Police come and seen Mum and gave me a bloody good lecture. (laughs) I didn't do it again. I thought, 'Well if he can pull them on', I said, 'I can pull them out'. Oh, we used to get up to some things we shouldn't have I suppose. Nowadays they put you in jail for it.<sup>25</sup>

Porter's re-telling is sprinkled with a sense of injustice, a belief that his family's size and poverty singled them out ... 'we used to get blamed for everything around Hackney - the Porters and the Lambs. We had a big family and the Lambs had a bigger family. So if anything goes wrong - the Porters'.<sup>26</sup>

While many parents set strict boundaries as to whom their children could play with in the street, what time limits they could operate within, and where in the streets they could play, few parents expected, or desired, to be actively involved in their play. Exceptions, of course, existed with some interviewees remembering parents playing with them. One interviewee recalled her father's custom of skipping with her at Easter, in the street - 'The men used to have a big thick rope and stand from one side of the street to the other - the men used to do that. And they used to turn this rope and we all used to skip. Every Easter ... all the fathers used to come out.'<sup>27</sup>

Usually, the lines dividing home and back-yard play from street play were strongly drawn, although the altercations of street play sometimes involved parents:

Ina Lloyd (b.1905): I know we had a fight with the kids across the road one Saturday and Mum said if they didn't get away and leave us alone she'd throw a dipper of water over them. So she promptly went in and got a dipper of water and my sister took it out of her hand and threw it. (laughs) So of course that was really funny. Next thing there was a policeman knocks on the door, you see. So the old lady (from across the road) she'd gone down to the Police Station and said that we'd thrown a dipper of water over her children and nearly drowned them. So as Mum opened the door, there she is, peeping through the curtains you see, and the policeman nearly went into hysterics. (laughter) Because Mum said there wasn't a drop of water went on them - they went for their lives. And it wasn't her that threw it at all - it was my sister. So of course he nearly had hysterics, he thought it was so funny. And he said, 'Oh, very well Mrs Hooper, that's all over and

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25 S.A. Speaks. OHI/20 Mr. James Porter, pp.9-10.

26 Ibid.

27 Arts Council of South Australia project. (henceforth, Fun 'n Games). Henley Beach, S.A. Interview with Mrs Butcher. (Birthdate not cited.) Tape 22, Side A.

forgotten'. So of course she didn't get anywhere. But she was a horrible old beggar and yet the kids were nice, you know.<sup>28</sup>

The extent to which children participated in the lives of others was controlled by parents and/or guardians. Some parents forbade their children to play in the streets at all. Molly Dutton recalls never playing in the streets, '**it just wasn't done**'.<sup>29</sup> In some families it was a mark of gentility to forbid children from playing in the streets. For the majority of children however, particularly city children, the street was a place where all the children from the houses nearby would meet to practise games, play with each other and torment adults.

The 'war' against adults drew upon children's considerable creative skills. Tension between adults and children was/is at its greatest in this time-honoured conflict between the cultures of 'adulthood' and 'childhood'. Liddia Spring recalls one particular trick with relish:

And anyway this night I said 'Hec, (her brother) I don't have to go to the shop tonight'. 'Oh', he said, 'Goodie! I've just heard of a lovely game. We played it and it was such fun'. So I said, 'What is it?' He said, "Oh, I can't tell you I've got to show you". That was fine, so after tea out we went. At the boundary of each property on Arbour Day we had planted a tree and each house could boast two trees, one at each side of the property. And there was a lovely spreading one, you know, it was beautiful to climb. So many nice boughs at such angles. So we got up the tree and Hector said, 'Now you watch, don't you laugh'. Cause I was a great one to giggle. I still do. And a man came along and all of a sudden Hector had a penny on a string and he let it go down - clonk - onto the foot path. It was the days before there were the electricity street lights. And he struck a match (the man), was looking, lit another match! Hector and I were under the tree giggling. Anyway, finally he gave up, thought 'Oh, that must have rolled away? He looked in the gutter and didn't think of looking up in the tree. And Hector said, 'Now it's your turn. So, here comes somebody, quick'. So as soon as they got near - clonk. And I looked, and it was my father! (Laughs).<sup>30</sup>

Most of the people I interviewed remembered playing variations of 'black rabbit', where string was tied to door knockers and repeatedly pulled, much to the frustration of

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<sup>28</sup> S.A. Speaks. OHI/19 pp.18-19.

<sup>29</sup> OHI., Molly Dutton.

<sup>30</sup> Fun'n Games. Interview with Mrs Liddia Spring (Birth date not cited.). Tape 4, Side A. ibid.

the householder. A tin of water placed on a fence was another prank much enjoyed by children - 'Then we'd take a string from the can into a gutter with a big stone on it and as the people used to walk along they'd hit this string, you know, and over'd come the water on top of them'.<sup>31</sup> Dressing up as ghosts was a favourite night time trick, as was any game that scared adults. Geoffrey Dix (b.1909) recalls putting large pumpkins to use in the following way:

(Dad) At one stage he had ..., I'm not kidding, you don't see them today, but ironbark, big pumpkins, (three foot wide). And we got hold of one one day and we cut all the inside out, you see - make a hole and cut all the inside out. Then we put two eyes, and then a big nose and then the mouth, and unbeknown to Mum - she's out one day - and we got a ladder. We climb up the ladder and we get right up the top of the chimney as tall as our chimney is here - and we put it right up on the top and put two candles on it, you see. They didn't even notice it was there the first time, and then we light it. (laughs) Of course when you walked up Pelham Street (Ethelton) you could see this big moon on the chimney. So we got into trouble over that.<sup>32</sup>

Night time, under the stars, was a time when boys and girls would play together, unsegregated, in the streets. While the younger children would have an earlier bed time, their older siblings would tell scary stories, swap jokes and riddles and generally maintain a quiet camaraderie which, hopefully, rendered them invisible to the eyes and ears of their parents. The more adventurous would choose the cover of darkness to 'infiltrate' neighbouring houses:

We used to go at night, a whole mob'd all gather together - 'What garden will we raid tonight?' 'Well', I said, 'Come on, we'll go down and raid Grandma's garden'. And we'd go down and raid poor old Grandma's grapes. She wouldn't give me one, so we used to raid her grapes. And then another night - 'What's tonight?' 'We'll go across the neighbours and we'll go into Clarice's place tonight, just cross the road - they got peas'. So we raided the peas. Scrumpling, we used to call that scrumping.<sup>33</sup>

Daytime street play is usually recollected along gendered lines, with girls skipping and playing hopscotch, while the boys played marbles, flipped cigarette cards and,

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31 S.A. Speaks. James Porter, p.15.

32 S.A. Speaks. Mr. Geoffrey Lancelot Dix, p.14

33 Fun 'n Games. Mrs Spring. Tape 4. Side A. (Birthdate not cited.)

depending on the season, kicked a football or played a version of cricket. Chasey games, duck stones, hoops and 'follow the sights' were examples of some games where girls could join in if there was a shortage of players. According to Mr. Hall:

Our times were different. I mean, if you were playing out in the street, no girls that were boys - or boys - no boys would look at girls. (sic) That was definitely out. The boys played with the boys - and the girls played with the girls. If you was caught with a girl, you was a sissy, and you was out of the gang. So you see, they had their skipping - they used to come out and skip, the girls. And the mothers used to come out and turn the rope. While all the girls used to run through - and (then) they'd have a go themselves. Mum and Dads used to come out and play with the kids in them days.<sup>34</sup>

That many girls resisted relegation to less boisterous pursuits is demonstrable in the oral testimonies. For some it has become a critical point of the retelling to remember themselves as being 'as good as any boy'. Within the culture and psychological dimensions of play, some interviewees spoke of play in terms of mastery and control. One interviewee spoke at length about the need 'to keep up with the boys'.

Margaret: Did you play with the boys?

**Patricia Fitzpatrick:** Yes. Particularly out of school hours.... On the way home I always went home with another girl and perhaps her brother and we used to play on the way home. We'd get home fairly quickly because we would want to play with this family.... There was one girl in this particular family and myself so we never looked to go and play with other girls. Never went to play with other girls because she had two brothers and the boys would always come and play. We always used to play with them. I don't remember ever going to a girl's house to play other than a birthday party.

Margaret: What would you play?

**Patricia:** Cricket in the summer. Football in the winter. I always remember we used to draw on the ground like a tennis court - usually a piece of timber on a stand across the centre of it. And we would draw out a tennis court and we would play four at a time with almost like a table tennis bat - a bit bigger than that, and we would play that for hours.

Margaret: Would you score?

**Patricia:** Yes. We had sides. I think we used to score like table tennis. And if you couldn't keep up they wouldn't let you play.

Margaret: You would have a boy as a partner?

**Patricia: One particular brother was very good and because I was the youngest I would have to go with him and the rest would go on the other side. But he was so much better than the others so he used to carry me. If you played them and got knocked over you just had to get up or otherwise they wouldn't let you play. I never ever played with girls other than that one girl.<sup>35</sup>**

Reflecting on this aspect of 'having to keep up', many interviewees alluded to the fact that they quickly became aware of the cultural dynamics of their inter-relationship with their peers. They learnt about differential status according to age, size and gender, as in the example above, as well as how they differed from each other on class, racial and religious grounds. The streets provided, in many ways, a mirror of the myths and beliefs of the adult culture. What is fascinating in Patricia's retelling of her play with boys is the sense of recapturing a lost symbolic space, a 'time' when it was possible to compete with boys and be accepted on her merits. As Patricia's narrative developed, within the interview, one gained a sense of her retracing the steps she made towards 'adult' independence. As an only child, of farming parents, she was boarded, at the age of five years, with her grandparents in the mid-north town of Jamestown. Having to combat acute loneliness in the early parts of her childhood, Patricia privileges her acceptance by the boys, with whom she played, as a symbol of her ability to 'keep up' - a guiding thread throughout her life, according to her narrative.

For most of the people I interviewed the streets are conceptualised teleologically - 'we survived the streets, with its attendant thrills and threat, just as we have survived life'. That the games they played disguised the praxis that was being smuggled in remains unacknowledged by the interviewees. The social roles, modes of social interaction, and organisational style and reason of street play, which found their way into the 'rules' of play and the practices of the games, are recognised at the level of mastering certain physical activities, complex verbal rhymes or skipping games, for example, but not always at the level that this mastery usually constituted with whom they played. 'You



didn't want to play with boys anyway'.<sup>36</sup> With skipping, for example, as with marbles for boys, girls learnt not just the intricacies of 'calling in' or 'Pepper, Mustard, Salt and Vinegar' but how to play with other girls, and when it was appropriate to play what with other girls. The inter-relationship between the games children played in the streets and traditional gender roles is dominant in the oral evidence. Although some girls, like Patricia Fitzpatrick, shared play activities with boys, many girls carried on a way of playing that Sutton-Smith has identified as 'the coach mother play frame'.<sup>37</sup> The data I have collected shows that all the females interviewed at some time were involved in game rhymes which reinforced the traditional gender roles of girls.<sup>38</sup>

As well as this early initiation into skills mastery and gender roles, the street served as a place where children could practice and perform mastery of their native tongue. The collaborative interaction involved in counting out rhymes, hand-clapping rhymes, parodies and other spoken and sung rhymes enhanced children's linguistic possibilities. The rhyming tradition, in particular, is one method in which children 'try out' the semantic subtleties of adult discourse. Removed from the confines of their homes children learnt how to mean, often in ways of which their parents would not have approved.

Parodies were one way in which children could 'safely' ridicule adult values, traditions and establishments. All of my interviewees could recall parodying certain teachers and school routines, while some recall parodying nursery rhymes and characters in the streets or neighbourhood.<sup>39</sup> While this verbal teasing can be valued in its own

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<sup>36</sup> OHI., Coralie Green.

<sup>37</sup> Brian Sutton-Smith, The Dialectics of Play. Verlag Hoffman, Schorndorf, West Germany. 1979. p.251. His main point appears to be that the fundamental biological child-bearing role of women has not been alleviated by other work roles. Such gendered play is still passed on from generation to generation.

<sup>38</sup> For example, the Farmer in the Dell; I Wrote a Letter to My Love; Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Sailor; Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush; Baby, Baby Bunting and Over the Garden Wall. The gendered nature of play is discussed more fully in Chapter 7, below.

<sup>39</sup> OHI., Mr. Walter O'Loughlin's favourite about his teacher ended with the immortal lines ... 'We'll do a pee, on the teacher's knee'. More general parodies were in the vein of

folkloric right, it also provided the children with an opportunity to learn about which objects go with what and extended their syntagmatic and semantic development and classification skills. As well as enhancing memory span it stimulated their mastery of phonological structures.

Many young children, early in the twentieth century, went to school having learnt to count, name the letters of the alphabet and months of the year, through observation of older girls playing in the streets. Kathleen McLean learnt the rhymes before she mastered the skills in such games as Letters, One, two, three four, .... and January, February ....<sup>40</sup> The rhymes and verses that children learnt to use through their street play contained a linguistic richness of alliteration, assonance, parallelism, metaphor and simile, antithesis, hyperbole and so forth. The ritualistic 'counting out' and skipping rhymes provided a regulatory and linguistic function and many did not rhyme at all, serving only to spell out the rules to the players, as, for example, 'High, low, dolly, Dutch, sugar, scissors, natural, pepper'. All the rhymes, however, whether spoken or sung, enmeshed the child in a range of linguistic and melodic forms which belong to universal ritualistic and mythical elements which pervade children's play.

The rich patterns and practices of children's verbal play, which so enhanced their collective practice of their native tongue, were frequently observed by 'concerned' adults as 'rude talk' which encouraged bad habits. Pig Latin was particularly resented by one interviewee's mother as **'you can't be up to any good if you talk that nonsense**

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'Ask your mother for sixpence, to see the tall giraffe, With pimples on his elbows, And pimples on his \_\_\_\_, Ask your mother for sixpence'. It is interesting that women interviewees were less reticent than the male interviewees in relating 'rude' parodies.

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OHI. Mrs Kathleen McLean recalls Letters as a game where a leader calls out certain letters of the alphabet to a group of players. Those with that letter in their name take a step forward, a 'little' letter scored one step forward. Other interviewees referred to this game as 'Initials'. Counting out rhymes took various forms such as 'One, two, three, four, five, six seven, All good children go to heaven, Open the gate and let them in, One, two, three, four, five, six, seven'. (One potato ....' became popular after the First World War.) Kathleen described the skipping rhyme of 'January, February, ....' as 'trying to skip through all the months to December. When you got to December you had to skip Pepper through all the months. If you got out you'd turn the rope'.

with your friends.'<sup>41</sup> This deliberate separation of 'adult' and 'child' worlds, through play, was of concern to many adults. Away from the gaze of adults, the streets presented opportunities for children to have 'unrestricted freedom'.

But, even for those adults who recall the times they played in the streets as 'gloriously free', and lovingly recall playing marbles, swapping cigarette cards, or playing tops, such moments of freedom were frequently short-lived.<sup>42</sup> For children were rarely free of adult contact, let alone influence, which partly accounts for the universal need of children to participate in their own rituals, and their own rites, of a sub-culture whose interiors Neil Sutherland has aptly described as 'opaque'.<sup>43</sup> Beneath the surface of narratives about street play lie multiple symbolic positionings of the self and others - the 'adventurous boy', 'the sissy', 'the little mother', to name but a few.

Perhaps, as Freud has suggested, all of life is oriented toward the reunification of the individual and his/her own ego ideal, the carrier of the image of narcissistic perfection.<sup>44</sup> The question for oral narratives is whether such pursuit of reunification, of this ego ideal, proceeds progressively or regressively. Freud stated:

As always where libido is concerned, here again man (sic) has shown himself incapable of giving up a gratification he has once enjoyed. He is not willing to forgo the narcissistic perfection of his childhood .... (He/She) seeks to recover the early perfection, thus wrested from him, in the form of an ego ideal. What he projects before him as his ideal is the substitute for the lost narcissism of his childhood - the time when he was his own ideal.<sup>45</sup>

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41 OHI., Mr. Frank Noonan. Pig Latin is a language form where the first sound of a word is put at the end, and then the syllable 'ay' is added. 'Atwhay illway away oday ownay, ankfray?' is translated as 'What will we do now, Frank?'

42 OHI., See Brice Wheaton, in particular.

43 Neil Sutherland, 'Everyone seemed happy in those days': the culture of childhood in Vancouver between the 1920s and the 1960s', History of Education Review. Vol. 15, no. 2, 1986. pp. 37-51

44 See Sigmund Freud, 'On Narcissism : An Introduction', The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological works of Sigmund Freud. Vol. 14. London. Hogarth Press, 1953-1974. (24 volumes).

45 Ibid., p.94.

Off the Streets.

Children's street life, as both playground and workplace, appeared to offer irrefutable evidence of parental neglect and an initiator into a life of crime.<sup>46</sup> Supervised, educational alternatives were sought to combat, and eradicate, the moral hazards of street life. The era of playgrounds in publicly designated, purpose-built spaces was ushered into the lives of children. The advent of public playgrounds represented an important step in the transference of children's play interest from the world of their own play objects to a world of play objects contrived by adults - partly out of a realisation of the perceived 'needs' of children and partly for commercial purposes.

As stated earlier, a conceptualisation of play is not possible without a preliminary conceptualisation of the total culture of which it is a part. As Sutton-Smith has delineated, the work-play dichotomisation of industrial civilisation, which provides the economic basis for Western theories of play, is highly relative.<sup>47</sup> But there are many other possible arrangements of cultural functions - and theories underpinning public playgrounds, with their attendant links to an emergent town planning movement, reflected this. Over-riding any differences of interpretation was, however, a central concern that children in inner-city industrial areas have an opportunity to play 'freely' in a supervised environment away from 'the dangers' of the street and open spaces. The Advertiser, Tuesday 8th November, 1904 reported 'gangs of rough youths' preventing others from enjoying the Park Lands.<sup>48</sup> Concern was not solely for controlling the streets. Pre-eminent in this concern was the control of older male children who may otherwise fall victim to 'larrikinism' and other corruptions.

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46 Helen Jones In Her Own Name. Women in South Australian History. Netley, Wakefield Press. 1986. p.44.

47 Cited in P. Gilmore & A. Glatthorn (eds) Children In And Out of School. Ethnography and Education. Centre for Applied Linguistics. Washington, D.C. 1982.,p. 188.

48 Adelaide City Council records refer to the 'green belt' surrounding the inner city council as, 'the Park Lands'. So, too, do newspaper reports encompassing the chronology of this thesis. Henceforth, I reproduce the terminology as written.

The 'need' for public playgrounds was articulated by many proponents within various broader governmental pedagogies, organised by the technology of moral supervision and underpinned by the emergent child-centred focus of the 'new education', with its dominant leit-motif of gendered 'normalising individualisation'. Governmental pedagogy and the 'facts' of child development were to become inextricably intertwined within the public playgrounds forum.

The United States of America and Britain, along with other industrialised nations, had vociferous proponents of public playgrounds. Many South Australians would have agreed with the American, Henry Curtis, who wrote, in Education Through Play, in 1915, that:

...what nearly every parent and observer of children has seen is that there has been little for children to do in the cities and that in times of idleness the devil has found much for idle hands to do! That the children are an annoyance to their parents and the neighbourhood and that they acquire many vicious habits during their unused time. The boys often learn to smoke and gamble and tell and hear many obscene and otherwise dangerous stories.

...It is not the play but the idleness of the street which is morally dangerous. It is then that the children watch the drunken people, listen to the leader of the gang, hear the shady story, smoke cigarettes and acquire those vicious habits, knowledge and vocabulary which are characteristic. When they are thus driven from the street to play upon the sidewalk or the doorstep, the only common games which they can pursue are tops, marbles, jackstones, war, craps and pitching pennies.

...The politeness and ethics of a game played on the street are on a lower plane than those of the same game played elsewhere ... play has probably reached the lowest ebb during the last half century than it has ever reached in the history of the world.<sup>49</sup>

Consensus was not automatically forthcoming. Indeed, the more observant watchers of children's street play, such as Norman Douglas, who wrote London Street Games, in 1916, were in a position to detail the richness and vitality of children's play. Douglas' book is an indictment of Curtis' perception and advocacy that organised, supervised, 'normalised' play was the answer to children's 'idleness'. Yet, even when delineations of the inventiveness of children's self-organised play existed, such discourses were

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49 Cited from Sutton-Smith, in Gilmore & Glatthorn Children In and Out of School. p. 188.

subsumed within the dominant discourse of the public playground as a sphere of 'normalising observation', a space organised around a type of moral observation through which children could come to see themselves according to the new gendered social norms they were urged to attain. Just as the 'specially-trained' teacher was critical in the transformation of child/school relationships, the public playground supervisor was also to carry out the functions of 'sympathetic inspector' and 'moral observer' whilst developing 'personal' relationships with the playground 'users'. It was no accident that such supervisors were women, it was an extension of woman's 'natural' nurturing role.

Unless a supervisor was appointed it was feared that the purpose of public playgrounds would never be fully realised. Curtis' predictions were dire:

In nearly all of our municipal playgrounds at least nine-tenths of all play is scrub-play, which the children make up themselves on coming to it. Many of the children loaf. Play of this kind can never give the training of either body or conduct which organised play should give, for in order to develop the body it must be vigorous, to train the intellect it must be exciting, to train the social conscience it must be socially organised. None of these results from scrub play.<sup>50</sup>

In South Australia, as the gentry relinquished the Park Lands from their fox hunting and polo playing pursuits at the turn of this century, as early as 1909 discussions gradually took place with the Adelaide City Council, when Alderman Isaacs first proposed the notion of providing playgrounds for the use of inner-city local children. 'Recreative', (sic) appliances were requested in Hurtle, Light, Hindmarsh, Whitmore and Wellington Squares. Despite the urgings by headmasters from schools adjacent to the parklands, by members of Parliament and Education Department officials, it was not until 1914 that the Adelaide City Town clerk placed children's playgrounds on the 'official agenda', on the 27th of March, 1914.

Urgings continued from many quarters, particularly from teachers, who placed it as an item of debate at the 1915 Teachers' Conference. One speaker, Mr. J. Moyes, contended, quite extraordinarily, 'that the making of men and women was not in schools,

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50      *Ibid.*, p.191.

but in playgrounds. It was in the playgrounds that the men who so gallantly captured Gallipoli had learned their work!' 51

In 1917, The Suburban Town Planning and Improvement Association, was unsuccessful in attempting to provide a playground in West Terrace, citing 'financial' and 'organisational' difficulties. In 1918, on September 16th a Last Minute was received from the Mayor of Adelaide, Mr. C.R.J. Glover, which, in part, stated that:

...The Council has on many occasions affirmed the desirableness of establishing playgrounds in suitable parts of the City, and it will afford the Mayoress and myself very great pleasure to further the efforts of the Council on behalf of the children of the City.<sup>52</sup>

Glover's generosity transformed the first requests for playgrounds from that of supplements to school playgrounds to specifically-designated public sites, with specifically-designated usages.

South Australian interest in public playgrounds was somewhat similar to that in other Australian States. In Victoria, for example, in 1906, a new organisation, the playgrounds movement, aimed at replacing children's unsupervised street games with the introduction of specific adult-organised play, based on the latest educational ideas for superintending moral, physical and mental deficiencies.<sup>53</sup> A Playgrounds Association was formed in Melbourne at the instigation of Charles Strong and, with the support of the National Council of Women and the W.C.T.U, gained the co-operation of municipal authorities and opened supervised playgrounds at Richmond and Footscray over the next few years. 54

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51 SAEG. Reports of Proceedings, 1915, p.216.

52 Adelaide City Council Archives. (henceforth ACA) Town Clerk's Department (15 Town Clerk's Special Files (S4) File No. 47C, 'Children's Playgrounds'.

53 Jan Kociumbas 'Children and society on New South Wales and Victoria 1860-1914'. Ph.D. thesis, University of Sydney, 1983, p. 289.

54 A. Hyslop 'The Social Reform Movement in Melbourne 1890-1914.' Ph.D. Thesis. Latrobe University. 1980, p. 250.

Medical support was garnered in the form of the Australian Medical Gazette which, in 1912, opined that all crowded areas should have open spaces 'sacred' to games and play for children. Existing parks should have 'rustic houses' with wide verandahs plus gymnastic apparatus, including swings and see-saws small enough for the use of infants.<sup>55</sup>

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55 Australian Medical Gazette, 30th November, 1912, 'Physical Training of School Children', p. 558. Indeed, educators in South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales seized the opportunity to state that such playgrounds should be in the hands of 'trained educators' and be supervised. Following on the lines of the Kindergarteners, the advocates of children's specially constructed playgrounds viewed them as sites of normalising observation where an 'adult version of the world', strictly supervised, censored, scaled-down, isolated and alienated, would enmesh the child in a morally superintended 'world', where only the qualified 'expert' in children's needs should be accorded a place. Newspaper reports of the time called for the protection of children in Park Lands from 'rough youths' and 'tramps' who, according to the Argus of the 20th June, 1914 presently 'disfigured the City Parks with their presence and their doings.' As in South Australia, demonstrable action regarding the setting-up of municipal playgrounds in Victoria and New South Wales occurred between the years of 1913 and 1918. A visit by Dr. James Barrett, in 1913, to American municipal playgrounds, was instrumental in the formation of the Playgrounds Association in Victoria. This later absorbed the movement formed in 1913 known as the 'Guild of Play' which, emanating from the women's division of the People's Liberal Party, was involved in the advocacy of the establishment of baby clinics as well as encouraging the building of playgrounds to: '...promote the welfare and happiness of children by helping and encouraging them to play organised games with the view to making them better citizens, and to use play leaders for supervision of such play. Ivy Brookes papers, Australian National Library, M.S., 1924, series 29, extract from The Argus, 28th August 1913, item 4, box 102, cited in Reiger, The Disenchantment of the Home, p. 423.'

In 1914, supervised playgrounds had been opened at Carlton, South Melbourne and Collingworth North with 'trained play-leaders'. According to Dr. Barrett, the playgrounds replaced the 'call of the streets' with the 'call of the playground' in the primitive mind of the child. Argus, 20th June, 1914 cited in Hyslop, *ibid.*, p. 251. The renamed Playgrounds and Recreation Association of Victoria did not, however, lose sight of Ivy Brookes' dictum that: 'The play of children should be absolutely free, and yet it should be towards efficiency for work and self-helpfulness. Free play and the serious conditions of labour should be trained towards each other as natural and wholesome reactions.' Typescript History of Playgrounds Association, item 281, cited in Reiger, The Disenchantment of the Home, p. 424.

The New South Wales Parks and Playgrounds Association had opened supervised playgrounds at Millers' Point and Victoria Park adjoining the University by 1914. Central to this organisation was a strong representation of teachers, with Alexander Mackie as President and Maybanke Anderson as Secretary. The Kindergarten Union was placed in charge of the management and other playgrounds followed in Wentworth Park, Glebe and Moore Park by 1917. See M. Walker, 'The Development of Kindergartens in Australia', Unpublished M.Ed. Thesis, University of Sydney, 1964, p. 267 for elaborated detail. This management role was actively sought and promoted by the Kindergarten Union,



In South Australia the Kindergarten Union, in 1918, responded swiftly to the Mayor, Mr. Glover's offer of a children's playground in the South Park Lands. Lucy Spence Morice, in her capacity of Honorary Organising Secretary of the Kindergarten Union of South Australia, suggested that it could 'provide an open air nursery school for babes'.<sup>56</sup>

With the proviso that the Union supply a teacher, the Council agreed and according to the Kindergarten Union of South Australia's Annual Report of 1918-19, regular attendance numbers were in the vicinity of forty, with occasional attendance by some mothers. Claims of a great improvement in health of participants were made ... 'Pale cheeks turned rosy, lassitude gave way to vitality and sores on limbs healed'.<sup>57</sup>

Education Department interest was also keen and Mr. Glover invited Dr. Ida Gertrude Halley, the Department's medical officer, to place at his disposal her experience in setting-up, along with Miss Inspector Lydia Longmore, the Port Pirie Playground, the first municipal playground established in South Australia, in 1918. At the women's urgings, Mr. Glover travelled to Port Pirie and inspected the playground. On the 18th of November 1918, By-Law No. XXXV, in Respect of the Glover Playground was gazetted.<sup>58</sup> Containing fifteen items it stated, in part, that:

4. No male person above the age of twelve (12) years (other than employees of the council or persons authorised by the Mayor or Town Clerk or Police), shall at any time enter the playground.
5. Mothers and female attendants of children may be present during such times as the playground is open.
6. No person above the age of fourteen (14) years shall use any of the appliances erected on or within the playground.

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as advocates of the playgrounds movement expected this too would 'open up yet another activity for girls', who would need to be trained as 'playground superintendents'. Australian Kindergarten Magazine, vol. 2, No. 7, July 1912, p.6.

56 ACA, Town Clerk's Department (C15) (S4) (47C). 'Children's Playgrounds'.

57 Kindergarten Union of South Australia Annual Report, 1918-19, p. 8, cited in Gillian Weiss, 'The Response of the Kindergarten Union of South Australia To Changing Social Need. 1905-1945.' Thesis in partial fulfillment of B.A. Hons, The University of Adelaide, 1976.

58 See Appendix B.

7. No person shall climb on or climb or jump over any fence or on or around the playground or in any way damage the buildings, appliances, trees, plants, seats, or other property on or within the playground, or place or leave any glass, paper, or litter of any kind therein or thereon save in the receptacles provided for the purpose.

10. No person shall spit in the playground....<sup>59</sup>

The official opening was held on the 19th of December, 1918, at twelve noon, by His Excellency the Governor of South Australia and Lady Galway. 'Squads' of children from the Gilles Street State School, under the supervision of the Headmaster, Mr. Gunn, demonstrated the 'correct' usage of each of the play articles, which were graded according to age and gender, planted seedlings and sang the Song of Australia. The School for Mothers Institute in Wright Street, Adelaide, sent ten 'interested' observers who mixed with other guests such as the Minister of Education, members and officials of the City Council, members of the local school committee and the Chairman of the Town-Planning Association.<sup>60</sup> The Park Lands Playground was to acquire, then, a new deployment and function as an arm of the emergent governmental educational apparatus.

The duties of the Supervisor were many and strictly laid out. Hours 'from October to March were from 12 o'clock to 6 p.m., from April to September from 12 o'clock to 5 p.m. Saturdays and holidays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays, Good Friday and Christmas Day are to be excepted.'<sup>61</sup> Inclement weather was not to be a reason for closing the playground. Record keeping was conducted daily, with monthly returns to the Education Department, and a copy to the City Council.

The object of this attention, the child, was to be involved in a series of transformations within an ensemble of techniques for training, organising and optimising his or her 'self'. Stowian religio-philanthropic concerns with the moral well-beings of individuals was neatly conjoined with the governmental concern with the

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<sup>59</sup> ACA. Town Clerk's Department (C15) (S4) 1918.

<sup>60</sup> See Appendix B for a plan of the playground.

<sup>61</sup> ACA. Special File No. 47B. 1918.

'moral and physical' condition of the population. Children also received a strict set of 'rules' as part of the technologies of control:

1. GROUND. A well organised playground is one in which children show thought for each other and respect for play apparatus and furniture with little or no loss of small material. Children are, therefore, requested to use care and thought towards each other and towards the material in use.

2. APPARATUS. Each piece of apparatus must only be used in the correct way.

3. EXCLUSION. No child of school going age is allowed in the playground during school hours unless recommended by the Medical Inspector.

No child who is suffering from or is in contact of an infectious disease shall be admitted to the playground.

Any child committing a rough or rude act will be sent from the playground.

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 The playground is for the children and they must help to make it a happy and joyous place, and never forget to "play the game".<sup>62</sup>

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 Children's play in the public arena was placed within a formal juridical framework of laws and regulations, rendering the children, or more particularly their families, 'open' to corrective interventions by the state. The public playground would assist in removing the formation of cultural attributes from the care of family and the companionship of the streets, along with that other purpose built space - the school.

'The Children's Playgrounds' Files of the Adelaide City Council document many letters sent, from the first weeks of the Glover Playground opening, to parents and/or Headmasters of boys found 'messaging the playground'. Girls, although mentioned on less occasions, were also excluded for 'undesirable' behaviour.<sup>63</sup>

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62 Ibid.

63 In its first year of operation only one person questioned the 'appropriateness' of the Adelaide City Council to discipline and/or report children illegally using the playground, and that was the Headmaster of Pulteney Grammar who vehemently denied any of his boys were visiting the playground during school hours. He suggested that 'Gilles Street State School lads' were the culprits. After a flurry of letters from the council producing names and times of the incidents, and reports from council ground staff present in the South Park Lands, the Headmaster sent an apology! ACA. Special File, No. 47D 1918.

In 1920, on the 14th of December, a second municipal playground opened in the North Park Lands, abutting Le Fevre Terrace. In 1921, the Government decided that the Kindergarten Union should have responsibility for the entire supervision of children of all ages in the two playgrounds. The existing grant to the Kindergarten was augmented to £1,000, for the provision of extra staff. The Register of the 26th of September, 1924 carried a story on 'The City Playgrounds', which was run at the behest of the City Council. It provided details of the resumption of Government control of the playgrounds and background detail to the 'origins' of the Park Lands playgrounds. The story announced the proposed opening of a new playground on West Terrace and detailed that 'notice was served on the Kindergarten Union that this decision (termination) was listed, as were hours of attendance, and notice was given that the playgrounds 'will be under the general supervision of Inspector Longmore' and that 'the children will be regularly inspected by the medical inspector of the Department (Dr. Gertrude Halley)'.

The new playground in West Terrace was duly opened and its December attendances recorded 10,290 with an average daily attendance of 392 children. The Supervisor, Miss Marie Dvorak, was moved to note that 'crowds of children from distant suburbs were visiting the playgrounds during the holidays'.<sup>64</sup> Even in winter the attendance records averaged two hundred and sixty children, per day. The Council continued to provide playgrounds in the Park Lands, with the opening of the Memorial Soldiers Playground in Lower North Adelaide in 1924, the Glover East Terrace Playground in 1925 and the Princess Elizabeth Playground, in South Terrace, in 1928.

That the playgrounds were a source of great civic pride is not in doubt. Many interstate and overseas visitors praised the playgrounds, with slides and newspaper photographs frequently being taken of the children at play. Miss Annie Wainwright, Supervisor of the South Terrace Glover Playground, most happily reported in May, 1928 that: 'Moving pictures were taken of all the apparatus in action for educational films to be

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<sup>64</sup> ACA. Monthly Reports, Supervisors, No. 47K. 1924.

shown in England'.<sup>65</sup> Extracts from the Visitors' Books at Children's Playgrounds reveal adult approval of such recreational sites:

'Ideal for the future race.' (Channel Islands, Jersey)

'A very valuable aid to the moral as well as the physical development of our future citizens.' (Woodside, S.A.) and,

'Very interesting to see such arrangements for children's pleasure'.<sup>66</sup>

That the 'children's gardens', the playgrounds, needed constant vigilance from unwanted pests and weeds, is demonstrable, both in official discourse and in oral evidence. Mary (Molly) Conry remembers 'a lovely playground we had up there when I was small,' the Glover Playground:

When it was first opened I went there. The lady of the playground said, "What religion are you?" When I told her what I was - Catholic - "You can't come here". So I came home crying to my mother, and I said, "We're not allowed to go to the playground". If you weren't a Protestant you weren't allowed in, and so that was it, but I don't know how many years after that changed and then everybody went there.

It was a beautiful playground ... it had a great big lawn in the middle; a lovely flag going up, Australian flag; children used to have their birthday parties over there years ago....<sup>67</sup>

The Park Lands Ranger frequently reported 'Footballers who play immediately at the back of the playground on Saturday afternoons and later on other afternoons throw stones at and upon the shed, and though promising to desist, continue to do so as soon as the coast is clear'.<sup>68</sup> Rat infestations often caused concern in the playgrounds, as did the frequent stealing of garden hoses, and the trampling of flowers and hedges by cricketers to get to the drinking fountain. But, the most in need of 'normalising' were those children who attended the playground and continued to exhibit 'perverse' behaviour. These children were

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65 ACA. Special File, No 47R. 1928.

66 ACA. Special Files, No. 47K. 1928.

67 City of Adelaide Oral History Project. Intv. with Miss Mary Conry. p.13.

68 ACA. Special File, No. 47F, 8th February, 1922.

to be 'liberated' in order to develop their own unique child-like selves. A direct consequence of this was an altering of the meaning and significance of parental control.

Mr. D. Bevan of 267 Halifax Street, City, wrote to the Town Clerk, on the 7th June, 1922, asking permission to accompany his son, aged five years, to the playground to play for one hour per day, under his supervision. This request was denied 'as it is contrary to the By-Law, which states "No male persons above the age of 12 years (other than employees of the Council, or persons authorised by the Mayor, Town Clerk or Police) shall at any time enter the playground". Patriarchal familial authority was no longer solely acceptable as the source or arbiter of the children's world of work and play, it too, was to be 'liberated', 'softened' in 'favour' of the mother and child.

Subsequently, dossiers were kept on children and their families. Many instances in the Council files are of minor import, others resulted in the consultation of solicitors. Most were along the lines of Florence Kerr, reported by the acting Supervisor of the Glover Playground, South Terrace. She wrote in a letter to the Town Clerk, dated 19th of March, 1923:

Dear Sir,

I have to report that Florence Kerr of Gilles Street School has been disobedient and insulting on the Glover Playground and on the advice of your foreman (Mr. Anderson) I suggest that she be forbidden to enter the grounds. This reported misbehaviour was witnessed by Mr. Daly, one of your employees.

Yours faithfully,

Acting Supervisor,  
Audrey C. Sutton.<sup>69</sup>

The Town Clerk instructed Foreman Anderson to obtain the child's private address and copies of Miss Sutton's letter and Mr. Daly's report dated the 23rd of March, 1923 were sent to the father along with an exclusion notice 'until further notification'. Mr. Daly's report stated:

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<sup>69</sup> ACA. Special file, No. 47D. 1923.

I was at the South Tce Playground on March 9th at about 4.30 p.m. and I saw the supervisor taking Florrie Kerr off a swing. I also saw Florrie Kerr kick and scratch the supervisor and behave in a most offensive manner and on Teusday (sic) 13th at about 12.30 I was at the Glover Playground and the supervisor called me to her assistance to put Florrie Kerr out of the Playground, she was again very impudent.

T. Daly. 70

No response from Mr. J. Kerr of 15 Clyde Street, Prospect is recorded.

More involved was the 'case' of Annie Tindall which can be read and constituted within an emergent 'normalised' framework of family/educational relations, with its imbrication of educative, social and hygienic norms. While the correspondence is lengthy, I will cite some of the letters in full as they depict the increasing penetration of governmental technologies of power into the social body.

The first letter is to the Adelaide City Council's Health Nurse from Miss Annie Wainwright, the Supervisor of the South Terrace Glover Playground, and is dated August 17th, 1923. Correspondence in the file, however, dates from the previous year:

Dear Nurse,

Can you help me with this problem? For years Annie Tindall of 129 Gilles Street has been coming to the Playground, in fact ever since she was a tiny baby. During most of that time she has suffered with discharging ears. Several times I spoke to Mrs Tindall about it when she brought the peram (sic) over to leave the child with me when she said it was caused through teething. However, I was not satisfied so about a year ago consulted one of your officers visiting the grounds asking what I could do for the child. He forbade me to touch the ears, saying that she must not come in that condition.

I thereupon wrote to Mrs Tindall explaining the position to her, which only resulted in annoyance and resentment on her part, she demanding the officer's name which I didn't know, telling her that enquiry at the Town Hall would find him. She kept the child at home for some time, but began sending her again after a lapse.

Now her ears are worse than ever. Of course I can notify her again but that fails as far as the child is concerned. Last week a big brother told me that Mrs Tindall will not have a doctor fiddle with Annie's ears. One ear yesterday was brimming with pus which has now become thick and greenish yellow in colour emitting a strong and most unpleasant smell detectable for some distance away.

Mrs Tindall knows that she can have attention either at the Wright St Clinic or at the Hospital without expense to her so that is not her objection.

The child is now over two and a half years so teeth can scarcely be still blamed for the trouble. I can see nothing further that I can do so should be glad if you would advise me how to proceed.

Yours sincerely,

Annie Wainwright. (Supervisor)<sup>71</sup>

The Town Clerk and the Secretary of the Local Board of Health replied to Miss Wainwright on the 7th of September, 1923:

Dear Madam,

I have by direction to point out to you the advisableness of excluding from Children's Playgrounds children who are suffering or suspected to be suffering from infectious, contagious, or offensive diseases, or who are contacts of cases of infectious diseases, or who for other reasons are considered undesirable frequenters of the playgrounds.

You are authorised to request such children to absent themselves from the playground (without giving any reason for so doing) and to instruct the parent or guardian to see that the request is obeyed until further notice.

You are advised to report at once to me the name and address of each child concerning whom action has been taken by you, and the reason for taking action in each case.

Yours faithfully,

Town Clerk and Secretary,  
Local Board of Health. <sup>72</sup>

On September 17th, 1923 Miss Wainwright pursued the matter with the Town Clerk, Mr. Beaver:

Dear Mr. Beaver,

Since reporting to you of having sent home Annie Tindall from the Playground on account of discharge of the ears and since notifying Mrs Tindall that she must stay away until further notice she has come to the Playground several times, today's visit being the fourth.

I have repeated the notice to Mrs Tindall. Is there anything further to be done by me other than sending the child home when she comes?

Shall I know when it is again advisable for the child to attend?

Yours faithfully,

Annie Wainwright. <sup>73</sup>

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71 . ACA. Special File, No. 47D. 1923.

72 . Ibid.

73 . Ibid.



Mr. Beaver, the Town Clerk, wrote to Mrs Tindall on the 18th of September, 1923:

Madam,

It has been brought under my notice that your daughter, Annie, is suffering from discharging ears and in consequence of the state of her health it is considered inadvisable that she should attend the Glover Children's Playground on South Terrace.

I must therefore ask that you will be good enough to see that she does not enter the playground again without first obtaining the permission of the Supervisor.

I am sure that you will agree with me that it is not desirable the child should be allowed to play with other children until she has quite recovered from her ailment.

Yours faithfully,

H.P. Beaver, Esq.,  
Town Clerk. <sup>74</sup>

Implicit in the letter is the acceptance of normalised behaviour which will aid Annie's 'progress' and render her more 'useful' as she becomes more obedient, more willing to absorb the new bio-medical techniques of play.

The final details of control had not, as yet, penetrated into the consciousness of the Tindalls' everyday experiences. Miss Wainwright again sequestered the Town Clerk, on the 29th of September, 1923:

Dear Mr. Beaver,

In compliance with your request this is to notify that the little child Annie Tindall was brought to the Playground again today, this time a big sister coming with her a girl over school age. I did not examine her ears neither was any mention made of them.

As next week will be holiday week for all the state schools probably Mrs Tindall is feeling her way in anticipation as usually the children spend most of their holidays here.

Yours Sincerely,

Annie Wainwright. <sup>75</sup>

Handwritten at the bottom of Miss Wainwright's letter Mr. Beaver has penned - 'Set out circumstances and ask c.Sol [Crown Solicitor] what action we can take to prevent this child entering the P. Ground.' <sup>76</sup>

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74     Ibid.

75     Ibid.

76     Ibid.

While awaiting the solicitors reply, Patrol Inspector Stoner was called into the fray:

4th October, 1923.

CITY INSPECTOR

Patrol Inspector Stoner is to be instructed to call and see Mrs Tindall, 129 Gilles Street, Adelaide, and to point out to her that despite my letter sent to her on the 18th September last her daughter Annie still attends the Children's Playground, South Terrace, although she has not recovered from her ailment. Mrs Tindall is to be informed that unless the child keeps away from the Playground until she is quite well, I shall have no option but to give instructions for the child to be removed and a summons to be taken out against Mrs Tindall.

Before the Patrol Inspector sees Mrs Tindall he is to see the Deputy Town Clerk.

H.M. Beaver, Esq.,  
Town Clerk. 77

The threat of a summons was expected to finalise the matter.

Patrol Inspector E.J. Stoner's report of the 5th of October, 1923 could not have met with unequivocal support in some quarters of the Town Hall:

Memo to the CITY INSPECTOR

Re 'Annie Tindall'

I called at 129 Gilles St today. Mrs Tindall was not home. I saw Mr. Tindall & the child in question.

I impressed on Mr. Tindall in the clearest terms possible the instructions given, & pointed out that no excuse would be accepted for non-compliance.

Mr. Tindall promised that every possible effort would be made to comply with those instructions.

Regarding the child, Annie, who at the time of my visit was play (sic) in the back yard, & appeared to be a very healthy child.

Mr. Tindall says she at times has a discharge from her ears which he says he knows is objectionable. There was no sign of this discharge today. She is 3 years old, well developed, well nourished, & vigorous.

She has a yard about 20 ft square to play in, & an ideal playground 100 yards distant. The other children of the family, (5 in all) together with scores of others rush off to the playground as opportunity offers.

Mr. Tindall says it is a very hard job to keep Annie locked up in that small yard, & if by chance the gate gets left open for a moment, away goes Annie.

I merely mention this to show the position these parents are up against.

E.J. Stoner. 78

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77      Ibid.

78      Ibid.

At three years of age, Annie's persistence in following her siblings to the playground continued to be noted by Miss Wainwright, but threat of court proceedings ceased. There is no recorded explanation as to what prompted the closing of her file. The file does serve, however, as a way of reading the increasing deployment of governmental technologies involved in a mass redefinition of consciousness, and the social and political conditions which surround the notion of 'play' as a practice which could administer individuals, and secure their regulation and discipline.

That the five City Municipal Playgrounds were well attended is borne out by the attendance figures for 1927 to 1939 listed in Appendix B. (The Princess Elizabeth Playground is only counted from October, 1928.) With regular inspections by Dr. Gertrude Halley and Miss Inspector Longmore, a standardisation of play equipment on all five playgrounds was achieved by 1929. Essential equipment consisted of Babies' Swings, Infant Boys' Swings, Infant Girls' Swings, Boys' Large Swings, Girls' Large Swings, a Sandpit, Wading Pools/Ponds - one for girls and one for boys, a Rocking Boat, a Joy Wheel, Roman Rings, Giant Strides, a Jungle Gym, a See-Saw Ladder, a Horizontal Ladder and Skipping Ropes. In 1929 a Giant Swing and a Slippery Dip were installed.

By the start of 1929, Supervisors comments were, to some extent, cognisant of the effect of the Depression on their charges ... 'Evidently poverty pinched the family, for the pram had been sold, the ten year old bringing the baby, aged nine months, on his back'.<sup>79</sup> Many commented on the long distances children were walking to play on the playgrounds and specific reference was made that 'the Playground is a great boon to the poorer section of this community'.<sup>80</sup> The News took the 'photo' of many of the children at the West Terrace Playground on the 30th May, 1931 who were 'in need of help through the Lady Mayoress' Fund'.<sup>81</sup> However, many scathing remarks were levelled at the family of six

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79 Annie Wainwright, Glover Playground, South Terrace, 28th January, 1929. Cited from ACA. No. 47J.

80 Ibid.

81 Ibid.

children who were habitually 'dropped' at the South Terrace Playground on Race Days, the children's ages ranging from eighteen months to nine years.

A small official window was infrequently opened to reflect a reality other than that of a playground as a 'children's garden': 'Many of the Italian children are very much persecuted by the children, which at times, makes it very difficult for the Supervisors to keep order. On one occasion the Women Police were rung and several of the children were reported'.<sup>82</sup> As the 1930s proceeded, two factors affected the lunch time attendance of children in the playground. Firstly, many of the older girls began to play basketball at lunch time in their school playground, and many older boys played football; and secondly, many Church and Mission Groups began to serve 'penny' dinners, seventy to eighty children were provided daily hot dinners by St Mary's Mission in Moore Street, City with similar numbers at St Luke's Church, on Whitmore Square, City. Others joined in during 1935.

In the midst of a depression, educators and other concerned adults were still vitally concerned to provide the 'correct' play equipment on their purpose-built playground spaces within their norm-saturated notions of a 'proper' childhood environment or domain of experience, overseen by their supervisors with their purpose-built empathetic personalities in whose 'moral observation' the children, not just of the streets and lanes, but all children per se would discover their 'true characters' and dispositions. 'Learning through play', with its attendant apparatus, continued to be a critical site in which the formation of new social norms for the government of the population could surface inside the formation of individual conscience. Coterminous was the belief that any proclivities for future (and present) dissent in such perilous times of unrest as a depression could be harnessed through 'playing the game of life' - the future of children could be controlled if you looked to their play.

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82 Kathleen Murphy, West Terrace Playground, January 31st, 1930. ACA. Special Files. 1930.

There is little oral evidence available about children's experience of municipal playgrounds. What I have read highlights such pastimes as the egg hunts held by the city schools in the Park Lands prior to Easter, birthday parties held at the playgrounds, bringing one's bathers to wade in the paddling pool on very hot days, listening to stories by the Supervisor and playing organised games such as card matching, Pass the Ring, and for the older ones - memory games. Permission for Sunday School Picnics was also granted sometimes to be held in the park, with use of the playground. What differences municipal playgrounds made to children is to be guessed at. Only two of the thirty people I interviewed lived near a public playground, and both Jean Sudlow's and Thelma Williams' experience was of the Hindmarsh Playground on the Port Road which was built when they were in their last year at Hindmarsh primary school. The dominant memory is of taking the younger school children to the park, which had swings, climbing equipment and a see-saw, and supervising their play during the lunch hour. Both remember themselves as 'too old' to play on the apparatus themselves.

The privileging of children's play within specifically designated purpose-built spaces such as the municipal playground, and the gendered and aged positioning of children within the attendant discursive practices, was part of a pedagogic practice that was saturated with the notion of a normalised sequence of child development. Such practices helped to produce children as objects of surveillance making possible what can be said and what can be done. The apparatus and mechanism of the supervised municipal playground signifies an intimate connection between the practices and the set of assumptions about learning and teaching premised on child development.

The reorganising of the pedagogical space of the playground can be understood in terms of individual cognitive development whereby play can be recognised, discriminated and trained while remaining 'free'.

That the rites of passage of moulding character and disposition according to new social norms, embodied in the 'moral supervision' of the supervisor, was not always easily obtained is evident from the supervisors' reports. Broken glass in the wading pool, cow

pats in the sandpits, break-ins to the Supervisors' rooms, constant complaints about the Princess Elizabeth Playground's sewer vents, frequent accidents where bones were broken and skin cut, 'unruly' behaviour, 'apathy' from some parents and constant vigilance against the unwelcome attention of some members of the public was part of the supervisors' daily routine. References are also made to the imprisonment of offenders caught by the police, as well as prosecutions of trespassers.

This ensemble of techniques and mechanisms aimed at the management and surveillance of human bodies and the transformation of the population as a whole comprised, on the public playground, that simulcrum of life itself, a double-edged technology of power.

That children did still play in the streets is demonstrable. That the neighbourhood was to remain their dominant playground, long after the motor car placed restrictions on their street play, is also not in question. Despite the large number of children attending suburban and city playgrounds, between the two world wars, there were many children for whom municipal playgrounds formed a minimal part of their consciousness. Yet, the municipal playground, along with the school playground, was a powerful agent in bringing large numbers of children and young people together in the same geographical space.<sup>83</sup> The municipal playground was articulated as a site where norms of morality, behaviour and appearance could be superintended through play. The time, space and physical dimensions of childhood play was to be transformed from that of the streets to purpose-built gendered playground sites where the threat from issues such as street children, larrikinism and neglectful parents could be ameliorated.

Before the physical dimensions of childhood could be further reconstructed, the lure of the neighbourhood - that site of inducement to truancy, where friendships were formed and a great deal of unsupervised time was spent - was to come under an

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83 The school playground as a site of changing childhood constructions is discussed below in Chapter 6.

increasingly critical gaze for the 'dangers' it presented to children for whom school was increasingly preferred as their 'main business'. The following chapter examines the local community site, and its conflicting influences on children, in detail.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### rites and rituals - the community and beyond

The neighbourhood provided more scope for parents and children to differ over boundaries of place, time and friendship. In it, as well, most children found a wider opportunity to explore forbidden places, to spend time with forbidden people and to partake of forbidden pastimes.<sup>1</sup>

For many children the physically separate world of the neighbourhood, the local community and its surrounding environs, offered an opportunity to move beyond the superintending gaze of adults. If offered the chance to smoke cigarettes, swear, swap jokes, sneak into the 'flicks' or the 'footy', to steal lollies from the local shop, 'wag it' to the beach or the bush, and indulge in such essential competitions (as either participant or onlooker) to find the best breaker of wind or see who could 'wee' the highest on a predetermined object.

The local community provided 'safe' places for 'playing doctors' and sharing information, most of it uninformed, about 'growing babies' and other matters of anatomical concern. It also provided a space wherein children could be renamed by their peers according to their physical attributes or abilities. Nicknames like 'Lofty', 'Bluey', 'Shorty', 'Fatty', 'Stinky' and 'Lard arse' abounded.<sup>2</sup> For many children the conferring of a nickname was a symbol of belonging to the group, admittance to the ranks. While most girls were excluded from this usually male practice, some, like Thelma Williams, utilised her family nickname of 'Jack' to what she believed was her advantage with her peers and older youths:

**I was called Jack because there was four grand-daughters born in a row and my uncle decided that two of them should've been boys, so one of us was called Jack and one was called Jim. And for years I retained that name and I can remember going to school and signing my first school books as Thelma Ruby Jack**

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<sup>1</sup> Neil Sutherland, "Everyone seemed to be happy in those days": the culture of childhood in Vancouver between the 1920s and the 1960s', in History of Education Review, Vol. 15, No. 2, 1986. p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> According to the interviewees, more males than females were given nicknames 'as girls didn't really go in for that much'. Usually, such childhood nicknames survived the transition to the adult world. See QHL., Wheaton, Ellis and Smalley, in particular.



**Johnson. (laughter) And to this day I have one old friend who never addresses me as anything else but Jack.<sup>3</sup>**

This desire expressed by many of the female interviewees to make up for their 'lack', to make the other the same, is frequently related in their narratives. Thelma retraced, with pride, an incident during a holiday on a farm at Houghton (in the Adelaide Hills) where she assisted with potato planting:

**I was only about eight or nine and they planted potatoes, and I worked along the row. They didn't want this bit of a girl coming there to their male community. They weren't so bad when I got there and they said, 'Well, what's your name?' and I said, 'My name is Jack Johnson'. That was alright then. But, I remember wearing all the skin off the top of my fingers planting potatoes. (laughter)<sup>4</sup>**

Children generally quickly discovered, like Thelma, that there were many prices to pay for membership in the gendered 'world' of childhoods. While many interviewees recall their days of playing in sandhills or open spaces, or elsewhere, with friends and foes alike, as a time of 'unrestricted freedom' and as days of 'real happiness', all children were learning to live out, consciously and unconsciously, a specific form of 'masculinity' and 'femininity'. The community, like 'the family' and 'the school', whether it be in remote areas like Oodnadatta or in inner suburban Adelaide, was a crucial site of 'normalisation' of the culture of childhood and the construction of gendered subjectivities wherein particular 'investments' were negotiated.<sup>5</sup>

This chapter, then, seeks to examine some of the remembered rites and rituals which embraced children in their communities and beyond, from the demands and dramas of the congregation and Sunday school, to the celebrations of Guy Fawkes' day. Children moved in and through their community, perceiving, comprehending and operating in a 'world' that was not

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<sup>3</sup> OHL., Thelma Williams, née Johnson.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> The concept of 'investments', as proposed by Wendy Hollway in 'Gender difference and the production of subjectivity' in Julian Henriques, Wendy Hollway, Cathy Urwin, Couze Venn and Valerie Walkerdine. Changing the Subject. Psychology, social regulation and subjectivity. London, Methuen 1984, is explored in Chapters 7 and 8 below. In this chapter, the term investments is utilised in relation to the ways in which individuals 'recognise' themselves within gendered subject positionings, for example, 'boys whistle, girls sing'.

the same as that of adult members of the society. Yet, it was a 'world' which, along with all other aspects of maternity and child care, was to come under increasing 'professional' and state scrutiny. Just as the concerns with precision, measurement and standardisation of child care redefined the construct 'natural motherhood' as the construct 'mother-craft', in which scientific principles were to be paramount, the 'free' play of children was to be redefined as their 'real work' by kindergartners, medical inspectors of schools, school inspectors, paediatricians and child psychologists who all claimed professional expertise in child-rearing matters. 'Real work', therefore, also necessitated redefinition along scientific principles.

As I discussed in the previous chapter, the initiative for the establishment of playgrounds in inner-urban Adelaide and city regions, and in the industrial rural city of Port Pirie, was an initiative of bourgeois reformers concerned with the conditions of the children of the working class, in particular their morality, physical fitness and behaviour. If 'the home' could be reshaped and 'the family' re-formed along scientific principles of management, then a dominant goal was the control of children's bodies in time, motion and space - a mythical naturalisation of dependence. Training a child to be a 'well-balanced' citizen of the future was discursively postulated as a 'national duty'. If the 'domestic sphere' was to be compatible with the 'public world', then the community, like the streets, was to be a site of significant re-formation and a site of struggle in the formation of subjectivities.

#### Religious Rituals and Rites

A central preoccupation of many families, earlier in this century, was attending Church and partaking in various forms of worship. In many communities, their most prominent feature was an imposing stone church, frequently sited on a hill or rise in ground level. Usually, they were the first public buildings in most settlements, preceding schools. Indeed, Adelaide is still frequently referred to as the city of churches. As David Hilliard and Arnold Hunt have pointed out, Protestant Christianity attended the individual and communal needs of most of the colony's early settlers:

... a higher proportion of the state's population identified itself with the Baptist, Churches of Christ, Congregational, Lutheran and Methodist churches

than anywhere else in Australia, whereas those churches that were a powerful majority in their United Kingdom homelands - the Church of England, the Presbyterian Church in Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland - were weaker than in any other colony or state.<sup>6</sup>

'Pious dissenters' of Great Britain were actively welcomed by George Fife Angus, a Baptist, and other prominent spokespersons of the South Australian Association, which was instrumental in ushering through the South Australian Act in 1834 in the British parliament. Angus formed the South Australia company in 1836. It was intended that the state would not be secular, rather 'neutral' in religion.

In the nineteenth century, various religious communities predominated in rural areas. With the advent of Cornish and Devon miners to the copper mines of Kapunda, to Burra, Moonta and elsewhere in the mid-north of South Australia, Methodism, be it Wesleyan Methodist, Primitive Methodist or Bible Christians, flourished. Self-educated farmers and tradesmen would conduct regular extempore worship and preached in either local homes or unvarnished church buildings. According to Hunt, in the 1890's in the Mount Lofty Ranges, about 150 services were held each Sunday in ninety-two Methodist churches, of which approximately two-thirds of these services were taken by local preachers.<sup>7</sup> The Lutheran community also came to be concentrated in certain towns and rural districts, such as the Barossa Valley, the Mount Lofty Ranges, the Murray Mallee, and the farming communities of the mid-north and Yorke Peninsula.<sup>8</sup> By maintaining their German language and their Lutheran rites of worship, the German-Lutheran communities, 'headed' by their pastors, remained aloof from 'mainstream' society, which made the events of World War One, and their repercussions, particularly bitter to bear.

The Church of England 'survived', as an 'embattled' minority by stressing its 'uniqueness'. Wealthier country towns, such as Mount Gambier and Gawler, along with 'élite'

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6 David Hilliard and Arnold D. Hunt, 'Religion' in The Flinders History of South Australia Social History (ed) Eric Richards. p. 194.

7 Ibid., p. 205.

8 See David Schubert Kavel's People which traces the emigration from Prussia, in 1838, led by Pastor Kavel, of a large group of Lutherans.

Adelaide suburbs, drew the 'largest number of adherents. With the founding of St. Peter's College for boys, in 1847, the 'public' image of the Church was eventually to become associated, by the town of the twentieth century, with the socially prominent and powerful.

Presbyterianism with a large church in the city, clustered around rural areas to which Scottish farmers had emigrated. This ranged from small hamlets in the Mount Lofty Ranges to rural congregations in the north. Without state aid, the training of ministers was difficult. As the wealthier congregations of Penola and Mount Gambier, in the south-east, had joined with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, funds were in short supply. Proselytising was to suffer as an effect. Congregationalists were to play a far greater role than Presbyterians in nineteenth century South Australia, particularly in public life as philanthropists and legislators. Along with Baptists, they formed a city and country network of small congregations.<sup>9</sup> Also active in nineteenth century South Australia was the Churches of Christ which moved among the population with various 'tent missions'.

Within this Protestant hegemony, the Catholic church and its adherents posed little obvious threat. The Catholic community in the nineteenth century was poor and sparsely populated, most of its members were Irish by birth or descent and many had come to South Australia seeking a refuge from the crippling effects of a series of potato famines in Ireland. Without state aid, efforts were organised into the provision of their own support systems, via religious, charitable and social organisations. The effect of the Josephite Sisters - under the helm of Mother Mary MacKillop - on the life of rural Catholics, is amply demonstrated by the number of Catholics I interviewed who had attended country schools run by the Sisters of Saint Joseph. The absence of priests in many country towns was more than compensated, in many Catholics eyes, by the presence of the nuns.<sup>10</sup> The early involvement of the Society of Jesus is evidenced by Francis Noonan, whose father, Peter Noonan of 'Glenmore', north of Jamestown,

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<sup>9</sup> At the turn of this century, Baptists in South Australia represented a higher proportion, per capita, of Baptist church members than any other country in the world, outside of the U.S.A. and Canada. See Hilliard and Hunt, 'Religion', p. 209.

<sup>10</sup> See QHL., Noonan, Slattery, O'Loughlin, Sladdin.

along with many other Catholic boys from the mid-north, boarded at the Jesuit College at Sevenhill, near Clare, in the 1880's.<sup>11</sup> A mission had been initiated at Clare in 1848 by the Austrian Jesuits, from which they later moved to Sevenhill where they founded their College, built a church and tended flourishing vineyards. In 1864 the Catholic rural community in the north was encouraged to attend public rituals, when the annual Corpus Christi procession was inaugurated. This was not to suggest that the city was left 'untended'. West Adelaide and the western suburbs, with its large percentage of impoverished Catholics, also were supported by a network of Catholic institutions at the turn of this century. Catholic day and boarding schools catered for the more affluent.

Mark Twain, in his visit to South Australia, in 1895, remarked on their 'luxuriant' growth of religious denominations.<sup>12</sup> Yet, there was also room for other religious options. The Salvation Army held its first meeting in Adelaide in 1880, which was also the first meeting held in Australia. The Christadelphians first met in Goolwa in 1880 and evangelists from The Seven Day Adventists began work in Adelaide in 1886.<sup>13</sup> In 1896 the first 'camp meeting' was held in Adelaide and was attended by the American 'prophetess', Ellen White. A 'Sanitarium' health-food cafe was later opened to proselytise her beliefs on health. Early in the twentieth century interest was evinced in healing and the occult, while small groups of Jehovah's Witnesses were reputedly studying 'Watch Tower' literature, by 1904.

Non-Christian religions were represented with the establishment of a Jewish synagogue in Adelaide in 1848 and a Muslim Mosque in Little Gilbert Street, Adelaide, in 1890, which catered for the 'Afghan' camel handlers and hawkers. Non-Christians, forming a very small percentage of the community, were more of a curiosity than a religious threat.

Rita Ellis recalls:

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- 11 OHL., Francis Noonan. When the Christian Brothers College in Wakefield Street, Adelaide, opened later in the nineteenth century, the role of the Sevenhill College diminished.
- 12 Mark Twain, Mark Twain in Australia and New Zealand. Penguin. 1973 Edition. p. 189.
- 13 See the Register 14th of July, 1923 for a report on the work of the Salvation Army in South Australia; and P. Johnston 'Preaching the everlasting gospel: The Seventh-day-Adventist church in South Australia'. Unpublished B.A. Hons. thesis, University of Adelaide, 1978.

We lived in Little Gilbert Street in the city and the Afghans were in that street - the Mosque - and it was about (gestures) the verandah was about three feet away from the fence. And we'd stand there and they'd pat us on the head... I was born there in that house. We all were. We didn't worry about them (The Afghans).<sup>14</sup>

Adelene Venables remembered that:

When we went to school (Mount Gambier) there used to be a Jewish family and they used to live at the bottom end of Commercial Road, they had a shop and always I used to wonder. The shop would be closed on a Saturday but open on a Sunday. I could never understand why they didn't keep their shop open the same as the other shops did. Of course, that's the Jewish religion. But as far as the Jewish girls were concerned we never made any distinction.<sup>15</sup>

While 'truth' and 'myth' blur with the re-telling, it would appear that there were few children who were not involved, indeed imbued, in the spiritual world of religious beliefs, rites, symbols and rituals. For all that religion had the 'power' to heal and console, there were many who would experience painful encounters with the effects of sectarianism. As children ventured into their community they discovered 'difference' of religion, as well as that of class and gender. Douglas Murrie, born in Georgetown, in the north of South Australia, in 1899, recalls:

And it was divided, Georgetown, between the Catholic population and the Protestant. It was about even really, and they had their own school - convent, church, everything. And we used to play them cricket and football and every now and then they used to have a fight. One of them'd say 'Oh, Charlie. I can beat Charlie in a fight', and they'd say, 'no, you can't.' Then, 'Alright we'll go to Piper's stables' - that was the hotel back in the - and there was all horse manure on the ground. A fall wouldn't hurt them, and we'd come away quite friendly, you know.

It was on Thursday - every Thursday - we used to play football with them, and they used to go to Confession, and they used to come out from Church in a ... Only one thing about it - they're shocking on language, the swearing. They'd come out and they'd call the priest every name under the sun, for keeping them so long, because they wanted to play football. And I said, 'Now, are you going to confess that when you go next Thursday?' 'Oh, no?' But they were nice.

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14 OHI., Rita Ellis, née Sincock.

15 OHI., Adelene Venables.

The only thing, there was a dividing line. Practically all of those, they became labourers - went out into farms and that sort of thing - and all the girls all went into service'.<sup>16</sup>

The ritualised name calling between Catholic children and Protestant children was known to all the people I have interviewed, and experienced first-hand by most - 'Catholic dogs, jump like frogs, in and out the water'.<sup>17</sup> Yet, for most children, it was all part of a game of life, whose rules they were only beginning to internalise:

**Jean Sudlow:** I suppose you mixed mainly with your own Sunday School group. But we all mixed at school. Of course, a lot of the Catholic children went to the Catholic school.

**But we had friends in the street that were Catholic.**

Margaret: That would be fairly unusual, wouldn't it, in those days to have a mixture of religious groups?

**Jean:** I don't think there were a lot of Catholics went to the public school. There was a family a few doors down - the younger ones were our age but we all used to play together. One of them went into the Convent - she was a lovely girl.... We didn't really go into their home. We went into their garden or front to play. But I don't ever remember going inside their place. I don't even remember them coming into our place. We played more in the street, then.<sup>18</sup>

Jean's best friend, Thelma Williams, recalls that:

**We did used to sing rather nasty little songs about, you know, about the Catholics sometimes. A bit anti-Catholic.... 'Catholic dogs jump like frogs, eat no meat on Friday?' Yes, we'd go up the street singing that out to them. I guess they sang things to us, too.**<sup>19</sup>

However, as Thelma points out, playing with Catholics as children was at least tolerated, whereas marrying a Catholic would have almost been unheard of - they would be almost tipped out of the family.

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<sup>16</sup> Mr. Douglas Gordon Murrie S.A. Speaks. OHI/29 p. 20. Born 23.5.99 Georgetown S.A.

<sup>17</sup> There are various versions of these chants. Adelene Venables remembers one which went 'Proddy, proddy, green guts' with something about a worm which would 'get her'! OHI., Adelene Venables.

<sup>18</sup> OHI., Jean Sudlow.

<sup>19</sup> OHI., Thelma Williams.

The trauma was extremely great and that hung on for a long time because my daughter married a Catholic and she has turned Catholic. We have got over that now but that was almost twenty four years ago and it was still a stigma almost in the family to have a mixed marriage.<sup>20</sup>

Agnes Clarke, a Catholic, mainly remembers mixing with Catholic children. 'In those days there was a lot of bigotry.' Unlike many of her peers, Agnes was to meet a man outside of her parents' carefully chosen circle, much to their consternation.

When I was keeping company with my husband he was not a Catholic and my mother was very annoyed about it. There were some quarrels over that so I wrote him a letter and told him not to come and see me again. And he wanted to know why. They were Church of England and they were good Church of England. He was taught at St. Peters and then Pulteney Grammar School and took part in sports and all that and he knew about religion. I told him he wouldn't be able to see me again. Of course they wouldn't do that now. Anyway, when he got this letter he asked 'Why?' and I said 'You are not the same religion as I am?' and he said 'Well, why can't I become a Catholic?' I said, 'There's nothing against that' and he took his religious instructions and became a Catholic.<sup>21</sup>

One of the sanctions against marrying a non-Catholic was that the couple could not be married in front of the altar. The priest would only conduct the wedding in the vestry. Many Catholics found it placed them and their partner in a bitter predicament.<sup>22</sup> To 'protect their flock' from the dangers of 'mixed marriages' and other vices all churches attempted to superintend their young via a series of social and recreational organised activities ranging from picnics, to sports clubs, to literary activities, and non-denominational organisations such as Christian Endeavour and the Boys' Brigade. For non-Catholics, Sunday School loomed large in the life of most children. German-Lutherans had Saturday School.

While few interviewees could recall in any great detail the actual hymns or drawings or activities held in the Sunday Schools, all had particular memories of Sunday School picnics,

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20 Ibid.

21 QHI, Agnes Clarke, née Burns.

22 Margaret Kenny, née Dutton, a member of the Church of England, married Dominic Kenny, a Catholic. 'It was horrible. I was really on the outer.... I went up to the Monastery and the Father really was terrible saying I would never go to heaven and things like that. They wouldn't even say a prayer for us. We were married in the vestry.' QHI, Kenny.



the boys' and girls' clubs, the gymnasium, Sunday School anniversaries, Church celebrations and concerts. Many, like Jean Sudlow and Thelma Williams, attended the same church, (Brompton Methodist) the same Sunday School, met their future husbands there, married in the same church and moved into the same suburb. A sense of shared community, of belonging to an extended family, frequently coloured re-tellings. Thelma Williams attended the Brompton Methodist Church, even though there were closer churches to where she lived in Hindmarsh, because 'my grandmother was the first child christened there'. Her father sang in the church choir, her grandparents attended the same service (despite her grandmother being in a wheelchair), her mother was in the Ladies' Guild, and Thelma also sang in the choir.

**Thelma: I can remember Harvest Festival times at the church. Nowadays, of course, you have Harvest Festival in your church and you bring groceries. There's very few perishable goods brought at all, but in those days we brought all perishable goods. And I can remember there was water melons there and, oh, we gloated over them. There were oranges and there was grapes and, we'd you know, rather surreptitiously go out and pinch grapes. But then, on the following Monday evening, after the Harvest Festival, we had a good old bang up social and ate the lot! (laughter)<sup>23</sup>**

Many interviewees also recalled that their parents' religious beliefs meant 'no drink, no cards, no dancing'. Mrs. Ina Lloyd, a Methodist, found a novel way around the family's rule of 'no dancing' when she was about thirteen:

How I learnt to dance was through my singing. They used to have what they called 'Concert and dance' and, of course, I'd be asked to sing. Mostly at the Catholic Hall - this is the funny part about it. I'd go over and I'd do my little song, perhaps a couple, and that would finish their concert, and then we'd have a dance.<sup>24</sup>

Other children, like James Porter, recall attending Sunday School 'Now and again, just to keep - so we'd be invited to the parties they held. What they used to call us? Cake snatchers or something.' For James, whose father had died when James was eleven, 'belonging' on his own

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23 OHI., Thelma Williams.

24 S.A. Speaks. OHI/19 Mrs Ina Lloyd (formerly Hall, née Hooper). Born 11.8.05 at Brompton, p. 20.

terms, was important. Churches frequently provided a source of free entertainment for the children of the poor.

Oh, we had a lot of fun. I used to win a lot of footraces in the picnics and that. Any Sunday School picnic came along, I could nearly always win them. I remember one picnic we had, and there was a chap that couldn't run much, and there was only a hundred yards sprint. You know, they put him up half way! He won it but only just, but I thought that was stinking though - half way. I mean you could nearly fall over and like win at them (laughs). Still, we were good runners and we had to give him a handicap.<sup>25</sup>

Under the auspices of the churches, moral life was worked out on a very public stage. Not only were religious attitudes formed, but attitudes towards authority, class and politics. These were frequently underpinned by, and through, the organisations of 'men's clubs' - from a variety of Lodges for non-Catholics, to The Knights of the Southern Cross and Hibernian Societies for Catholics. Some of these activities were 'public', such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the various health guilds, but many were 'secret' - and, as such, a source of puzzlement and amusement for young children.

**Agnes Clarke:...**when my father joined the Knights of the Southern Cross, I suppose I must have been thirteen or fourteen then. When dad joined, of course, they were more or less a secret society. He would go on a particular night - we'd say 'Where is dad going?' and mother would say 'He is going to a meeting'. And when we asked 'What sort of meeting?' she'd say 'Don't ask questions'. 'Oh, I suppose its that Ku Klux meeting! We knew it was something, but didn't know what. We weren't allowed to be told.'<sup>26</sup>

Agnes' father was a foundation member of the Knights as well as a member of the Hibernian Australasian Catholic Benefit Society. 'Dad was a great Hibernian. We belonged to the Lodge. He was in the Hibernians pretty well all his life and was a trustee. He was always interested in all those things. He started the

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25 S.A. Speaks James Porter.

26 OHI., Agnes Clark, née Burns. The Knights of the Southern Cross was formed in Adelaide in 1921. Catholic males had to be personally invited to join the organisation and they were not to disclose their membership outside of the 'brotherhood'. Prior to 1921, meetings were held in private homes by those Catholics interested in mutual support. No written records exist of these meetings, nor of their members names, aims or objectives.

**Catholic Young Men's Society in Parkside.**<sup>27</sup> Many of the Catholics I interviewed, whose families had lived in Adelaide, had parents who belonged to the Hibernian Society which provided them with a form of medical benefits. This was not unique to Catholics: many Church groups had 'friendly societies' for this purpose, and all had their own attenuated rituals.

**Thelma Williams:** My father belonged to the Oddfellows - Band of Hope Lodge. I believe it was a Hindmarsh Lodge. Oh, there was something funny. If a Lodge member died, they flew a flag at Hindmarsh on the flag pole, and I think one of the other Lodges was called Manchester Unity and ours was the Bud of Hope Lodge. And you knew which member died by the flag that went up the flag pole.

Margaret: How did the Lodge work...

**Thelma:** Well, I think the doctor got a shilling a quarter from each of the patients he attended, and we used to go along with our little Lodge book and he'd write the prescription in it and you didn't have to pay because you belonged to a lodge. If you were sick, you got some very small amount, but considering the wages at that time were particularly low, people had to exist, sometimes, if possible, on their Lodge pay. Because there wasn't the sick benefits, like now.

Margaret: Where was the Lodge money banked/kept? Who was in charge?

**Thelma:** Funny you should say that. I can remember my grandmother and grandfather saying, in the early days, the old chappy who went to the Lodge, he always brought home the Lodge takings wrapped up in a handkerchief on the end of his walking stick which he slung over his shoulders. Now could you imagine anyone walking up the street today with the equivalent of that amount of money - it would only be a few pound then, but it'd be a fortune slung over in a red handkerchief tied like a lunch handkerchief, on the end of his walking stick, walking up through Bowden and Hindmarsh with the Lodge takings! (laughter)<sup>28</sup>

Children moved in, and through, a web of various denominational religious rituals from baptism, to First Holy Communion, to Confirmation, to weddings and funeral services, all of which were expressed publicly. Christmas and Easter rites also formed an important part of the various churches' festivities. Catholic children attended more funerals than their non-

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27 Ibid.

28 QHI, Thelma Williams.

Catholic partners, which appears to have much to do with the Irish tradition of holding a wake after a funeral, which all ages would attend. Even if one saw a funeral passing the O'Loughlin children were taught to **'take a step back and say a Hail Mary for them. And you would always take your hats off'**.<sup>29</sup> German-Lutheran children not only always attended funerals, but the body was kept in the house for the community to pay their respects. Children were not excepted from such viewing.<sup>30</sup>

Molly Dutton remembers that in her Church of England family 'neither children nor women were allowed to go to funerals'.<sup>31</sup> Consequently, Molly, like many other children, never saw a dead body when she was young. Those who did can still recall it in great detail.

**Eileen Said: The first one I saw was a child's funeral. It was a new-born baby - well it just lived a little while.... I was only young then - but anyhow the baby died and I remember being - that was a funny thing when you come to think about it - I was one of the pall bearers. They just had the little children and I was only tiny.... I used to play with the little girl (the baby's sister) - I couldn't have been at school - I used to play with ... Narraine I think her name was, a lot.**

**They weren't Catholics (so) they just had something (at the grave). It was a little white coffin - I can remember that. I have an idea we were in little white dresses and white gloves.**<sup>32</sup>

Jean Sudlow remembers when a school friend died that she wanted to see her as she knew she would not be allowed to attend the funeral:

**When we were about eight or nine - Grade Five I think - I must have been ten - her name was Rita and she died. I don't know why or what happened. She lived around by the oval. I said to mum 'Could I go round and see her?' and mum said if I wanted to I could. I can still see this child's father shining his boots getting ready to go to the funeral. She was beautiful. It's**

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29 QHI., Eileen O'Loughlin; Walter O'Loughlin.

30 David Schubert, personal interview 6.4.89; QHI., Donald Linke.

31 QHI., Molly Dutton. Molly's sister, Margaret Kenny, who was nine years younger than Molly recalled 'Even when I was first married, I didn't go to funerals. No one went to funerals except the man of the house.' QHI., Margaret Kenny.

32 QHI., Eileen Said (née Connell); Mrs Sladdin also was a pall bearer twice at the ages of twelve and thirteen, for her friend Monica, who died of Typhoid Fever, and for a baby. QHI., Veronica Sladdin.

something that I have never, ever forgotten. When we went back to school of course we were late, teacher wanted to know where we had been and we told her. She asked if my mother knew. But I had never seen a dead body before that.<sup>33</sup>

Kathleen McLean's first viewing of a body was when she saw her grandmother laid out in her coffin. Funerals, being forbidden to her, became a target for her curiosity.

...we used to go up to the cemetery and see if we could find any funerals and then we'd tuck on to the mourners. Two or three of us after Sunday school. It was a two mile walk up there, too. At that time I would be about twelve or thirteen. More or less allowed a bit more freedom too. We'd go in and have a look. And they used to take children to funerals, the ones we saw. One man buried his wife and he had four or five children all dressed in black alongside of him.... The horse drawn hearses had big black plumes on them.<sup>34</sup>

Attending actual Church services is remembered far less in their own right than the social and cultural fabric within which such rites were imbricated. Horrie Simpson, at Oodnadatta, laughingly remembered 'We were Roman Catholics and the priest would only come up once a year. I used to dread that because I used to have to put on boots to attend. I never wore shoes, not even to school. It was agony ... to wear shoes.'<sup>35</sup> Some, however, proved the exception, such as Agnes Clarke, who clearly recalled the services on Good Friday:

We used to have about three hours on Good Friday night and, of course, the Passionists were up at Glen Osmond and they still are of course but one of them was our parish priest - they did that and then after a few years were given the choice of staying on or going as a missionary.... But we used to have this three hours and different priests would give the sermon on the seven last words of Our Lord. We'd have to track off to that.<sup>36</sup>

Christmas services were marginalised for some children because of the other festivities surrounding the day. For more affluent families like Molly Dutton and Margaret

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33 OHI., Jean Sudlow.

34 OHI., Kathleen McLean.

35 OHI., Horrie Simpson.

36 OHI., Agnes Clarke.

Kenny (née Dutton) Christmas dinner and the hanging up of the stocking overshadowed the going to Church.

**Molly Dutton:** We would go to church and we would have Christmas dinner and stockings and all that sort of stuff. Hanging up the stockings the night before was the tradition. As children coming out in the morning - I think we all believed in Father Christmas until we were in our teens almost. Sneaking out in the morning and then going back to bed because you wouldn't dare get up before a certain time. We used to hang up our stocking along the fireplace. And we left out glasses of lemonade for Father Christmas. We used to leave a drink for Father Christmas and my father used to go to the trouble of getting soot on his fingers and put it on this glass so we thought Father Christmas had drunk it.

Margaret: What kind of gifts did you received?

**Molly:** Books, I think. Probably anything that we specially wanted. Dolls. I don't know what happened to my dolls. I suppose my brother had trains and those sorts of things.... (We had) an old pine tree. We would stick it in a bucket of sand and decorate it up. But hanging up the stocking was the main thing, I think. And really believing that Father Christmas did come down the chimney and bring these things. We were very naive sort of children. We believed that for a long time.<sup>37</sup>

An evening meal of 'poultry and plum pudding' was accompanied by 'crackers and bon-bons'. However, for many children like James Porter, Ann Barber and Adelene Venables there was neither a feast nor a festivity.

**James Porter:** We never had any Christmas celebrations in our place. We never ever seen Christmas presents. I remember once, the only present I ever got was a little clockwork toy that some kind lady bought me, and gave me. I thought I was wonderful.

[Interviewer] Do you know who the kind lady was?

**James:** No idea. Some charitable lady. No, I don't know who it was. No, she just brought me this little wind up toy. My gosh I thought I was made. (laughs) No, we had really a very poor Christmas. Mum used to take us to the front door if she.... 'Oh', I said, 'any sign of Father Christmas?' She says, 'No, it don't look like it this year?' She says, 'Kids, wait till my ship comes in'. But I think that ship got wrecked before it came in. (laughs) We had no Christmas celebrations.<sup>38</sup>

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37 QHI. Molly Dutton.

38 S.A. Speaks. James Porter.

Ann Barber remembered that she never ever received a Christmas present 'and if a lot of the family was around you'd be lucky to get any dinner either. The kids were always the last to be fed'.<sup>39</sup> As a fostered child, Adelene Venables also never received a Christmas present, 'it was just another day, but we'd go to Church'.<sup>40</sup> Both professed not to be bitter about their situation.

Every interviewee at some stage in their narratives supported quite strongly the centrality of some form of religious rite and ritual in their childhood. Only one, Coralie Green, reflected on the churches' role of replicating class divisions and the male/female dualism.<sup>41</sup> Apart from the 'difficulty' of mixed marriages, to which several interviewees referred, not one commented in any detail on the various churches' responses to unmarried mothers, or to abortions, or incest or any other issues, such as deserted wives. For the most part, priests, pastors and ministers were paid homage as leaders of their community to whom families could turn in times of trouble. All churches were concerned with the moral welfare of their members and many of their guiding tenets were being espoused by the interviewees.

The 'public' face of religion, whether displayed via Saint Patrick's Day parades or at the Sunday School picnic, served to envelop both adherents and non-adherents, young and old, in 'the way they ought to go'. Whether it be the victory of the temperance forces in 1915 to force hotel bars to close at six o'clock, or the successful campaigns (prior to World War Two) to outlaw state lotteries, neighbourhood communities, through the agency of the churches, provided a means of exerting moral discipline and control over the young. That many youngsters adopted 'playing the priest' or 'preaching from soapboxes' as part of their daily play serves to reinforce the extra-ordinary effects the churches inculcated in those

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39 QHL., Ann Barber.

40 QHL., Adelene Venables.

41 QHL., Coralie Green. See, in particular, in Appendix A, pp.408-491.

generations.<sup>42</sup> Churches and their social organisations attempted to provide norms about such matters as pre-marital sex and alcohol, and they attempted to do this by superintending children's time, space and motion. Gendered divisions were re-inforced in all the rituals, rites and symbols. Even such diverse groups as 'The Children of Mary' (Catholic) and 'The Sunshine Glee Club' (Methodist) would uniformly dress their young girls in white for special church festivities. 'Difference' was consciously signified and articulated in gendered religious power/practices.

Narratives frequently blurred such gender and class distinctions. Interviewees chose to stress their adherence to a 'spiritual view', a typology of 'ethics' which they had 'used' as some form of guiding thread throughout their lives. To this listener it became apparent that gendered symbols, rituals and myths of religious practices had been 'externalised' and 'internalised' in the re-tellings. Religion, (like art) to some extent, 'lived'/'lives' in the minds of the interviewees insofar as it is performed, whether in 'actuality' or in the re-telling. Its rituals are on-going concerns. For example, most Catholic interviewees could recall acutely the smell of incense burning and the hushed, solemn atmosphere as the drama of the Benediction played out. While it is no longer a part of everyday Church practices, it lives on in their re-memorisation. It would appear that for most interviewees religion is not a cognitive system, a set of dogmas, alone. It is enmeshed in a web of inter-actions and beliefs. As the narratives revealed, religion is expressed as meaningful experience AND experienced meaning. As Turner has aptly described, 'In ritual one lives through events or through the alchemy of its framings and symboling (sic); one re-lives semiogenetic events, the deeds and

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42 Bill Burns and his sister Agnes Clarke would always 'play mass.... Bill was mad on Church - he was an altar boy - we'd play mass and we'd have two or three kids. We'd have the mantelpiece for the altar. Bill was always the priest'. QHL, Agnes Clarke; Coralie Green, who was christened in the Spicer Memorial Church, had parents who were firstly Salvation Army members and then ran their own missions: 'I can remember ... being on a soapbox and having a few sermons as part of my play...." QHL, Coralie Green. As Thelma Williams said, 'Then you pointed out the ones who didn't go to Church, now you point out the ones who do go to Church'. QHL, Williams.



words of prophets and saints or, if these are absent, myths and sacred epics.<sup>43</sup> As such, religious rituals continue to provide generative and regenerative processes.

Venturing Out: The World Beyond.

Deployed within an ensemble of ethical obligations, ethical practices and supervisory techniques, children would sometimes venture out of their street and out of their immediate neighbourhood and, with their friends, or on their own, explore their wider community. To be allowed to venture out without an adult was a sign of growing maturity. Jean Sudlow recalls:

**I used to catch the tram - I would be ten or eleven - before I left school. I would take my doll and catch a tram here (Hindmarsh), I'd change trams in town and I would go out to Parkside to my cousin who was the same age as me. And I would stay the weekend. That was mother's sister and she had three girls. I used to love going out there. Then perhaps the next weekend one of them would come down to our place. We used to travel with the doll in the pram. Nobody would be with me. I'd change trams in town. I knew what to do and where to go. I didn't wander around the streets ... the girls next door ... we'd walk through the Park Lands with our dolls and the men were playing two-up down in the creek of the Torrens.... But you know there wouldn't be one of those men would look at you.<sup>44</sup>**

Most of the interviewees mythologised venturing out, away from superintending gazes, as being 'unrestricted' and free of 'harm'. That this was not always the case is underscored by Jean's friend, Thelma, who clearly recalls that young children were not made explicitly aware of the implications of the dangers that could confront young children, although she was told by her mother, without elaboration, 'not to accept lollies from strangers or to go with strangers'. At the age of eight years, she discovered one of the implications for herself:

**I was walking up this particular street - Young Street (Welland). Normally I would have walked up Arlington Terrace on to Grange Road. This Sunday afternoon I would go a devious way - I remember I had my bible open, and I was learning the text. I guess that's why I came up Young Avenue way, because it's a quieter street, no traffic, and I could have a long walk to Sunday School. And I was learning my text.**

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43 Victor Turner 'Social Dramas and Stories about Them', in Critical Inquiry. Autumn, Volume 7, No. 1. 1980. p. 167.

44 OHL, Jean Sudlow.

A man came along on a pushbike and he stopped. And he said to me, 'Do you know where so and so lives?' I said, 'No'. So he asked me what street it was, and I turned my back to him pointing out where the street was. And then I turned back to him and he said, 'Have you ever seen a thing like this?' and he had his fly undone and his penis hanging out of his fly. I ran! I said, 'You rude man' and I ran for my life. Wasn't far from the Grange Road and I ran all the way to my friend's house and told her what had happened. And then I came home after Sunday School, told my father, and he didn't know what to do at that time. But our Choir master at Hindmarsh was the Town Clerk of Hindmarsh and so we went down to Mr. Bishop (the choir master) and told him what had happened.<sup>45</sup>

Thelma's narrative is illuminative in that it provides a rare glimpse into the 'exterior' world's implosion on the opaque 'interiors' of the world of 'childhood' and its 'sexed' subjectivities. Not only did Thelma have to decide on a course of action, she had to work out who to tell, what to tell and how to tell (and re-tell) her story. Her father's indecision as to how he should act escalated her concern. It resulted in her access to public space always being a conditional access.

Boys were not circumscribed in their access to public space to the same degree as girls. The River Torrens, in particular, in Adelaide, was a popular 'forbidden' territory for all kinds of activities.

James Porter recalls:

Harold and Len (his brothers)... They used to go to the Starry. (A swimming hole in the River Torrens they used to call Starry.) There was a cliff on the other side of the river - oh, must've been fifty feet high. you know, they'd high dive off that into the Starry. I was never any good at diving myself, but those two were - they were good, especially Len. How they had the nerves to do that I don't know.<sup>46</sup>

As it was subject to periodic flooding, and there were numerous cases recorded of children drowning, the River was a place where male feats of 'derring-do' were privileged. Jumping off the numerous bridges over the Torrens and swimming in the swimming holes and gullies, which also were subject to flooding, was a long-held tradition. Thelma Williams related '**We always said that Hallett's or Barry's brick kiln pughole saved us**

45 OHI., Thelma Williams.

46 S.A. Speaks. James Porter.

from getting a lot of flooding because when the Torrens overflowed it used to fill the brick pughole first'.<sup>47</sup> Brice Wheaton recalls 'the Windsor Street ditch' at Parkside, which was an offshoot (a creek) of the River Torrens:

**Brice:** Every winter it would overflow. As a matter of fact, my younger sister, Mary - when it overflowed used to leave a whole bay or water, like a lake our backyard was - she was just walking and all of her winter clothes on, all her woollies and everything. She was missing - they couldn't find her and they saw her footmarks in the silt. And they looked down. The next eldest sister, Jean, she ran down and followed the creek and it turns out she went under a footbridge in Blythe Street ... she chased her down to Foster Street, under the roadbridge there, and my sister (Jean) jumped between the footbridge and the road bridge and caught her.... And all she did was scrape her nose!<sup>48</sup>

Yet, despite, or because of, the dangers of the River Torrens, it remained a central form of play and display, mostly, for boys.

The public 'face' of the display aspect of the River Torrens was best depicted by the Henley-on-the-Torrens. Anne Tonkin remembers 'There used to be beautifully decorated boats and all the ladies would have on their new dresses and their parasols, pretty hats and walk along the River. There was a Punch and Judy show and a few things like that. That was only once a year'. There were no races:

**Anne:** There must have been a prize for the best decorated boat and they would just come up and down the River.... Must have been February because I can remember Mother having this very lovely lavender and lemon frock that she wore that was a silk material, so it must have been summer. I would say January/February. You could buy ice-creams. Of course, nobody ate out like that in those days because that wouldn't be etiquette. You had your gloves on and your hat and veil over your face.<sup>49</sup>

The early decades of the twentieth century were a time of great 'public' events in the community. None of which had greater impact across all of the communities than the announcement on the 4th of August, 1914, of the Great War which, perhaps, was the ultimate

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47 QHL., Williams.

48 QHL., Brice Wheaton.

49 QHL., Anne Tonkin, née Theodore.

signifier of the end of the nineteenth century era. From the isolated far-north of South Australia to the fledgling settlements of the River Murray children, sometimes uncomprehendingly and sometimes unheedingly, everyone eventually heard that War had 'broken out'. It somehow made this 'far-flung continent' not seem so isolated 'from the rest of the world'. Horrie Simpson, in Oodnadatta, was aged nine when he heard the news - **'The station master's daughter came down to our place and said to my sister that a big war had started'**. Other than having **'to go to the Railway Station and sing songs to welcome them home, which I hated'** Horrie left it to his mother and sister to knit and sew for the soldiers. **'They used to have a party at each house. You had afternoon tea and they would knit and sew ... go all around the town like that'**.<sup>50</sup>

For other children, their involvement was more directly experienced. Verba Hocking, born in 1908, still relives the terror she experienced when War was declared:

Well, I can remember everybody talking. You know 'War, War' and I couldn't understand what it all meant. In fact I felt so terrified I remember when the men were going to be shipped overseas, marching down Rundle Street and watching from the balcony (of her parents hotel), and I can remember vividly soldiers on horses with their plumes in their hats and that, and also the day that the fuss was on when they smashed all the wall of mirrors. I was really terrified because I thought war had really come to there. As I say, you don't understand the seriousness of things or how things work when your only the age of six. I'll always remember that.

They were all in army uniforms and that. That was really terrifying because the noise was something shocking. I could sketch the lay-out of that hotel - our hotel. You came in - there was this long, wide entrance hall - and on the right you walked into what they called the front bar. And behind the front bar was this beautiful saloon bar, and I can always remember all this beautiful wall of mirrors. I can always remember that - Oh, well, we heard the noise. It was a shocking noise. And then, see, as you'd go along to our room, it was like a passage, but it was all glass and from our room you could see right inside the saloon bar. All this noise - it was terrible. And then I looked through the glass, and you could see what they were doing. They were aiming everything they could get hold of at the mirror. I know I was terrified - I was screaming - because I thought the war had really come to the hotel. I could see it now, if it was only just happening, and it was all soldiers' uniforms.

As soon as that happened ... I don't know, I suppose the police would have come in - I just don't know - but when they (the soldiers) were asked why it happened, they said straight out that it was because of the German name. It

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50 QHL, Horrie Simpson.

was called 'King of Hanover'. Well, straight way, they had to change it to 'Commonwealth'.<sup>51</sup>

Communities all around South Australia responded to rising anti-German sentiment. Children threw stones at Germans' houses while their parents boycotted German businesses. Names of towns like 'Blumburg' were changed, virtually overnight, to Birdwood and other English variants, and in 1917 all German schools were compulsorily disbanded. Arthur Schubert believed **'the Australian government was very unfair, they had no reason to be so hard on the German citizen. Yes, alright there were some who were very pro-German, but generally speaking most of the Lutherans weren't very interested in politics at all and were quite innocent of what they were accused'**. As Arthur pointed out:

**Not only that, but also a lot of our relatives went to war with German names. Certainly in the First World War.... I have never ever thought they were unpatriotic in fighting against the Germans - fighting for the British.... Generally they were a peaceful and hard working people.**<sup>52</sup>

Anne Tonkin's mother's name was Grahl. When the Great War was announced her uncles decided to change their name, both first and family name. One of Anne's uncles **'was working at Clarksons. And Clarkson in the olden days was Vawser, and he had changed his name to an English name. He said to my uncle "It would be a good idea to change your name"**. So he changed it to Burn'.<sup>53</sup> Such consequences were lifelong, as these reconstructed memories highlight.

With the return of the soldiers came the inauguration of another public display - the Anzac Day March, and with it one of Australia's enduring national male myths. 'Private' grief could be attenuated in 'public' memory. **'Anzac Day, that was always a very religious kind of day. Dawn service, then another service at the Park in Adelaide - the**

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51 S.A. Speaks, Mrs. Verba Daphne Hocking (formerly Champion, née Barlett). Born, Murray Bridge 8.8.08, pp. 10-12.

52 OHI., Arthur Schubert.

53 OHI., Anne Tonkin.

big march, then after midday it was a free day. They had all sorts of things. The football wouldn't start until after midday. It was a revered day, and so it should be.<sup>54</sup> To differing extents, it was a scene played out across South Australian (and Australian) communities, forging itself deep into the national psyche. The mythology engendered by the Great Way re-affirmed male/female dualism; it reaffirmed the constructs 'male hero' and the 'female handmaiden'.

Many children were not only spectator/participants in the mass 'public' displays, for example, of Eight Hours Day, Anzac Day, St. Patrick's Day, Empire Day and Flower Day, which all drew large crowds, but were rapidly drawn into viewing 'the most amazing spectacle of all' - the moving picture. For some it put watching their heroes on the football field 'in the shade'. Venturing out into this magic world cut across country and city, ethnic, class and gender lines. Hence, Kym Bonython, a member of 'the gentry' could write enthusiastically in Ladies' Legs and Lemonade, 'In the silent-screen era, movies had a glamour which seems to have faded. We certainly didn't notice the lack of sound. An orchestra, or at least a piano, played appropriate music or provided sound effects for each scene.' His obvious delight at viewing the World War One piece Hell's Angels is recorded thus:

A motorcycle was set up in the orchestra pit, and during the exciting dog fights on the screen the bike was fired up and the throttle 'blipped' to coincide with the diving and rolling war planes above.<sup>55</sup>

Such delight and enthusiasm is also present in Thelma Williams' account, albeit, in a much 'humbler' theatre than the Wondergraph.

**Thelma:** The first pictures I went to was in Hindmarsh in an old galvanised iron tin shed on the Port Road, near George Street. It was a tin shed and it was run by a man called Jewy Rose or Rowe - never sure which. He was a Jew, of course, and he had this picture theatre there. We used to go Saturdays to see the pictures and the serials. They had something about lions and Africa and when I started to dream about the lions I was prohibited from going to Jewy Rowe's picture palace. My great aunt and great uncle - they had a private income and didn't work - he took her to Jewy Rowe's pictures and it rained. (laughter)

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54 OHI., Len Ellis.

55 Kym Bonython, Ladies' Legs and Lemonade. Adelaide. Rigby Ltd. 1979. p. 23.

Well, you never went to Jewy Rowe's pictures in the winter unless you took your umbrella, because you had to put it up when it rained. (laughter) You could actually watch the pictures through the holes in the galvanised iron walls. My husband's brother did. And Mrs. Jewy Rowe used to play the piano and very often the boys threw things at her! So it was quite a hilarious time. Later we went up to the pictures at the York and we'd go to the Wondergraph and then we'd see the organ at the Regent. When I got about fifteen.<sup>54</sup>

The world's first talking picture was shown at the Wondergraph Theatre in Hindley Street, in 1929. It ushered in a new mode of leisure and cultural experience, of changing consciousness. It also ushered in the gradual dominance of American 'talkies' where the Australian idiom was replaced by American cultural hegemony. The new heroes were in the same genre as Tom Mix, Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplin, Jackie Coogan, Wallace Beery and Harold Lloyd. Some, like Laurel and Hardy, even made the transition to sound. As the entranced audience chomped on their 'peanuts, a penny a bag',<sup>55</sup> normative narratives were played out on a screen, where 'life' seemed blissfully clear, where 'things' appeared to mean something by themselves. Such myths abolished for their spectator audience the complexity and contradictions of human acts.

Communities were involved in 'mass' cultural consumption for the first time, in the form of a shared, social dimension of the 'unconscious'. Moving pictures constituted a temporal form, a narrative form in which the problems, contradictions and irreconcilable demands made by the acquisition of sexual identity, family structures and historical conditions could surface in collectively held desires, obsessions and anxieties. As in the religious rites, rituals and symbols experienced in the community, children were not merely passive spectators. Some, like Brice Wheaton, 'went once and I didn't like all the noise or the lights going out' so did not attend again until he had children of his own.<sup>56</sup> For others,

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54 QHI., Thelma Williams.

55 Bill Burns would go to the Pavilion theatre in Rundle Street where it 'was continuous, it would start at 10.00 a.m. and would go until 11.00 p.m.... The boys would come round with their trays and they'd be singing out 'peanuts a penny a bag'. The afternoon's outing would cost me sixpence halfpenny'. QHI., Burns.

56 QHI., Brice Wheaton.

like Anne Barber, cost prohibited attendance, or their community was simply too geographically isolated.<sup>59</sup> For those who did attend 'the movies' it was a reflexive, 'meaningful' experience.

The wireless, similarly, presented another 'glimpse' of the world beyond the immediate community. Like silent movies, crystal sets were quickly over-run by the introduction of new technology, but for many their magic lingered on.

**Brice Wheaton:** We had the first crystal set in the street. The first valve set I made was a two valve English set, Sterling speaker. I used to have that on the front verandah and all the people would line up down the street to listen ... unfortunately, my brother asked me for a loan of it one weekend.... He took it down to Mitcham to the 'Torrens Arms' (a hotel) - they used to have an SP (Starting Price) bookmaker there - in those days, the only time they'd hear a race from Melbourne was on the phone. This set used to be able to pick up the direct broadcast from Melbourne.

He came home this night and said, 'Here, put this under your bed, get rid of it out of the road.' Gave me a five pound note. I never knew for ten years after what he did. He was picking up Melbourne and had this bloke positioned outside the pub who'd run in after the race and place the winning bet. (laughs) Then they rumbled at the finish! (laughs)<sup>60</sup>

Many interviewees recalled the phantom cricket broadcasts to which they would crowd around to listen. Sporting heroes, such as 'our Don Bradman' soon became household names. Radio, for many, became a part of 'everyday life'.<sup>61</sup> In the 1920s and 1930s, recorded music, the telephone, motorised transport and aeroplanes opened the windows of the 'world of childhood' even further. Aeroplanes proved a rich source of fascination, for children and adults alike. Most of the people I interviewed could recall in copious detail the first time they saw an aeroplane fly overhead. Some, like Brice Wheaton, stood on their back-yard suburban

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59 QHI., Barber, Simpson.

60 QHI., Brice Wheaton.

61 Anne Barber, born in 1920, never had electricity in her Spring Gully house, during the eighteen years she lived there. They were without a telephone, running water, a clock and a wireless. They never had a crystal set, either. They did have a gramophone but we 'never touched it or played it as it belonged to the Boys'. QHI., Barber.



windmills to watch Harry Butler fly over-head. Elsie Wheaton described how **'we all pulled our heads in'** when **'Harry Butler took off from the Unley Oval. It was just like when they put the first man on the moon'**.<sup>62</sup> Horrie Simpson was sixteen years old when he saw his first aeroplane. **'It was flying Francis Birtles'** and they stopped for petrol **'on their way to Alice Springs'**.<sup>63</sup> It landed on the 2nd of October, 1921, at Oodnadatta. Some children, like Margaret Kenny, were fortunate enough to participate in a 'joyride' with her mother. **'It cost one pound. We had goggles and a helmet and the pilot flew from Parafield along the coast. It was marvellous'**.<sup>64</sup>

For many children, even those in remote rural communities, the 1920s and 1930s were a time not only of 'venturing out' but 'the wider world' 'venturing in'. The landscape they called their own was at once 'public' and 'private', a site of childhood desires and adult constraints. Certainly, the Depression years had such a lasting impression on many of the people whom I interviewed, that it affected their behaviour toward their own children and grandchildren.<sup>65</sup> Despite the tendencies to eulogise their childhood in their narratives, there is a residue in many stories of inscribed loneliness, of pain, and of the fear of not belonging.<sup>66</sup>

### Family Fun

The dominant narratives of community life revolve around family weekend activities, visits to the beach, holidays, sporting fixtures, going to the races, and special festivities such as Guy Fawkes' celebrations. In the midst of the Depression years, supporting one's football team increased, if not in attendance, in cultural significance. Even going to the (Central) Market on a Friday night was for some a form of family fun.

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62 QHI., Elsie Wheaton.

63 QHI., Horrie Simpson.

64 QHI., Margaret Kenny.

65 See Chapter 8 below, for some of the 'legacies' of this era and its 'normalising' affects.

66 See Chapter 7, below.

James Porter: ... we used to go across to the Central Market in them days. Well, there used to be a vacant area there (where Coles' are now) and there used to be the Adelaide Fish Market and Ice Works there then, and on either side of that vacant place there was two, what they call Cheap Jacks.....

Well, there used to be these two vans full of all sorts of prizes and watches and clocks and all that, and a little platform used to come out from this - this platform - and the chaps used to come out with a big bundle of little tickets and you used to pay a shilling for a pick. Of course there weren't too many good ones amongst them. And when we were kids we used to go over and say, 'Any good to you mister?' and if they were not good they used to give them to us and we used to go up and collect them after. You know, we'd get a pencil or a comb or a packet of pins or something. We used to take them home to Mum.... They were no good to us but Mum used to use the pins and the safety pins and pencils and things like that. Lots of little things went on then ... and the gardeners would often give us a bunch of carrots or throw us a cabbage or something. It all helped.<sup>67</sup>

The technological effects of the 'modern' society were to be a long time in re-forming many of these leisure activities. The Glenelg beach, in particular, was a place of nineteenth century and twentieth century leisure. The following description, by Kathleen McLean, of Glenelg, prior to the First World War, 'matched' many of the descriptions given of Glenelg between the Wars.

**Kathleen: Going down to the Bay on the 28th (Proclamation Day, the 28th December) the train used to go about every quarter of an hour and it would be packed. They would be hanging off the bottom steps. The train used to run down Jetty Road.**

**There was sideshows all along the esplanade. Punch and Judy and different things like that. Merry-go-rounds, the big wheel, throwing balls at different things. At at one stage, they had a cone like that (gestures) and it came up a slope like that, rounded, and it came up to the middle. You sat on this and it started going round and round. You had to sit right up on the cone. If you stayed on it, people threw pennies in. It would start going round and round and it was all padded around the side. In the end there was nothing to hold on to, you would slide off the end. I can remember one time I got right up on the cone and I could sit on that cone and go round and round like that. I got quite a lot of pennies thrown in to me.<sup>68</sup>**

The excitement of 'the baths' was a regular occurrence on Saturdays for Kathleen and her friends. 'The ladies baths were further away from the jetty, you had to pay

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67 S.A. Speaks. James Porter.

68 QHI., Kathleen McLean.

so much and you had a cubicle to get undressed in.... I was fourteen when I was allowed to go down there on Saturday afternoon. Mum would come down about five o'clock and bring the tea down'. As Kathleen recalled, 'the men bathed on the other side. And of course they didn't have bathing costumes - they bathed raw. It was all partitioned off. I believe there was one or two peepholes'. It was from such a vantage point that Kathleen's little sister, Laurel, came racing back to inform her mother, 'Mum, mum. You'll never guess what I saw. A boy's got a tongue sticking out from his belly!'<sup>69</sup>

Leisurely promenades on the jetty were part of the ritual and it had a 'restaurant on the end of the jetty where you could go down and have a cup of tea and buy some ice-cream'.<sup>70</sup> Glenelg was also a place where the women's police eventually came to 'keep an eye on'. Many of the interviewees recalled stories of Kate Cocks, the first woman police officer, 'intervening' between courting couples.<sup>71</sup> Many of the interviewees would take rooms in boarding houses at Glenelg, particularly over the summer holidays. For many country families, like the O'Loughlin, Noonan and Slattery families, it was an annual tradition. More affluent families would take rooms at Glenelg, Port Elliott or Victor Harbour, making sure, like Bill Burns, at the age of seven years, to 'enquire from the proprietress - "Have you got a chimney for Father Christmas to come down?"'<sup>72</sup>

With the coming of the motor vehicle, more families travelled to popular events like the Easter horse racing at Oakbank. Although gambling was still frowned on by many church-going adults, Catholic families appeared to worry about this aspect the least. Agnes Clarke recalls accompanying her grandfather to the Victoria Park race course regularly where he

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69 Ibid.

70 OHI., Anne Tonkin.

71 'Boys to the right, girls to the left' was an often repeated anecdote which was supported by an 'eye-witness' account from one of the couples interviewed who 'declined', laughingly, to be named.

72 OHI., Bill Burns.

would always place a bet.<sup>73</sup> Country race meetings at places like Clare, Jamestown and Oodnadatta were also popular community events.

Perhaps one of the most remembered festivities was that of the fifth of November - Guy Fawkes' day. Whole families would gather in empty paddocks and 'have a bit of fun'.

James Porter: We used to make an old Guy up and put it in a cart and get up early and catch people going to work, and we used to sing.... You know the old Guy song - 'Guy, Guy, Guy - a penny for a Guy, if you haven't got a penny a ha'penny will do, and if you haven't got a ha'penny, God bless you'. And we used to have to sing this all the time, and you know, we'd get money, then we'd go up to the Hackney Hotel on the corner and wait there, because we used to get a lot more customers around there, than we did others. Then we'd buy the fireworks with what we collected. On the same evening all the adults used to go to the Torrens bank, between the bank and the river, and make a big bonfire. Then we used to have all this cracker night up 'till about eleven o'clock at night. Of course the adults, they had sky rockets and all - we only had the little cheap fireworks like the jumping jacks and the crackers and the small canons. Of course the adults had big canons. And flower pots, and wheels and sparklers.<sup>74</sup>

Despite James Porter's somewhat aggrieved tone, his narrative reflects the sense of shared ritual and shared fun. Even though the chant would change in the singing, burning the Guy was a spectator/participant role for most children of these decades. It was always, during these years, held in a public space. Kathleen McLean recalls '**There would be a crowd of about fifty. The children would dress up as Guys**'.<sup>75</sup> Even in the far-north of South Australia and the fledgling west-coast and Eyre Peninsula settlements, a guy would be burnt. Some of the more unsupervised efforts would necessitate the calling of the fire brigade.<sup>76</sup>

New Years' 'pranks' often saw the constabulary being called out. Paddy Baker remembers:

**The radicals. They were out New Years' Eve looking for trouble. I will never forget it. There was a Mr Pope lived over the way and he had a horse and gig. A few of the young fellows went over there**

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73 QHI., Agnes Clarke.

74 S.A. Speaks. James Porter.

75 QHI., Kathleen McLean.

76 QHI., Patricia Fitzpatrick. 'We accidently set the paddocks on fire one year, playing with crackers when we shouldn't have been!'

and he had a freshly organised haystack and they put that gig right up on top of this haystack. Mr Pope was at church. And in the morning when he woke up, there was his gig right up on top of the haystack. He couldn't get it down on his own. Somebody told the police about it (laughter) so the policeman organised to have it taken down. And he picked up these two lads and said he wanted them to give him a hand for a while, and they were the two lads who put it there.

Margaret: How did he know?

Paddy: (Laughs) I don't know. But he knew it was them.<sup>77</sup>

Most of the interviewees could recall community pranks on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day. As the motor car gained in popularity, it, too, suffered similar indignities to the old horse and gig. Anne Tonkin recalls:

New Years' Eve was the worst. You'd find people's cars would be painted white, if they were black, or a cow might be tied up at the hotel door. All sorts of silly things like that. Painting the animals was the worst thing they used to do. The first thing we'd do New Year's morning would be come very gingerly out to have a look what happened along the street.

I remember one New Year's Eve, we hadn't gone to bed and we were in the room and we heard this noise out front, and my cousin from Queensland was with us. We had this shop in the front where we used to do dressmaking, and I went up and just pushed it back (the door) and these fellows were on the other side. They got such a shock to think people were in there. They were going to fool (around) on the window, and off they went for their lives. There was plenty of that sort of thing on New Year's Eve.<sup>78</sup>

Others, like Agnes Clarke (née Burns) would follow their Scottish custom of 'first footing' - 'we'd always let a dark haired haired man cross the threshold first',<sup>79</sup> and some, like Adelene Venables would have no celebration at all. Most country areas would organise some form of community get-together which would be an opportunity for many families to meet. Mrs Elsa Hay-Taylor recalls New Year's Day picnics in the south-east of South Australia:

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77 OHI., Paddy Baker.

78 OHI., Anne Tonkin.

79 OHI., Agnes Clarke.

Well, we used to go out into the scrub and have wonderful picnics. Every New Year's Day was the Bool Lagoon picnic race meeting and it was organised by all the people that lived in Bool Lagoon. They took their horses they used on the farm and raced them. The ponies for the children who were old enough to ride ponies, and they had all sorts of funny races like egg and spoon races. But they trotted.... The people who had trotters. The Pattersons, for instance, they had beautiful horses. They showed their horses every year - four in hand - and all these lovely horses came and all the little farm horses, they raced. Then they had games for the children, too. Three legged race. You know, you tie one leg to the other - two children by that leg, and then they run that kind of race.... It was a lovely day. We used to look forward to it all year.<sup>80</sup>

The intensity of emotions aroused by shared family fun was evident in many of the interviewees' memories. Family walks, shopping expeditions or outings to the beach were frequently interwoven into the narrative. The same incident was often recalled within the space of one interview. The attention paid to the events often turned the re-tellings into an epic saga.

**Jean Sudlow:** We would walk down to the beach. Grange. (from Hindmarsh)

Margaret: That was a long walk.

**Jean:** Yes, it was. It must have been four or five miles. And Mum pushed the pram with the baby in it. Dad would ride his push-bike and we used to take turns riding on that. That was only to take the dog. On a Saturday we used to often go down the beach and Mum would take a packed lunch. Sometimes, we'd go down to Semaphore, and then Dad would come down straight from work. This was a Saturday and we'd come home on the train and then we'd have to walk from Bowden Station.

This must have been after the War (WWI) because there was old Sammy Lunn and he used to have an icecream cart and he made up lollies and made a lot of money for returned soldiers.

He'd come around and we'd get an ice cream for a penny, and if you didn't have a penny you took a bottle out and got an icecream for that. He used to go down the beach and he'd come home on the train.... He was a real comedian.<sup>81</sup>

The currency of laughter was well used and developed by children. The ability to laugh with adults was also turned on adults. Playing tricks on adults, parodying their actions and telling jokes about them placed adults outside the world of childhood. 'Pretended innocence'

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80 S.A. Speaks. Mrs Elsa Birch Hay-Taylor. Formerly Butler, née Gibson.

81 OHL., Jean Sudlow.

was a frequently assumed mantle of disguise. 'We'd do anything for a laugh', was a common refrain. Not only was there a special 'language' - for example, being dared to show one's 'marrow' had nothing to do with vegetable growing and everything to do with one's penis, but the forms of language used was meant to exclude adults' ears. 'Rude' jokes were particularly popular, as in the genre of 'Little Audrey' jokes.

For example,

Little Audrey's mother sent her down to the shop to buy some fly paper. Little Audrey laughed and laughed and laughed. 'Cause she knew flies don't use paper.

Or,

Little Audrey's mother sent her down to the shop to buy some moth balls. Little Audrey laughed and laughed and laughed. 'Cause she knew moths don't have balls.<sup>82</sup>

Other cherished 'rude' jokes ranged from the 'Julius Caesar did a breezer' ilk to 'The boy stood on the burning deck ... burnt his little jimmy' (penis) genre. The presumed ability to 'shock' adults was much prized. If one could combine swearing with bodily functions in a joke, or story, it was usually an instant success and brought the teller 'status'. Typical of this genre were the 'Pat, Mick and Mustard' 'jokes':

Pat and Mick were travelling to the city by train. In those days they only had dog boxes, little compartments where people were closed in. Pat wanted to go to the toilet and didn't know where to go. So Mick said, 'Drop your tweeds and do it out of the window'. Just as Pat finished, they were pulling into a station and the porter was calling out the name of the station to let passengers know where they were. The name of the station was 'Isawya'. And he was calling out, 'Isawya, Isawya'. Pat answered, 'You bloody liar, you couldn't have - I did it coming round the bend'.<sup>83</sup>

There was a great deal of prestige to be gained from telling 'rude' stories or jokes as it showed other children that the teller had 'grown-ups' 'knowledge'. Boys frequently positioned themselves in active joke telling roles, while girls usually positioned themselves in a passive, listening mode.

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82 From un-taped discussions with the husband of Patricia Fitzpatrick, Mr. Lloyd Fitzpatrick.

83 Ibid.

Within this 'world' of 'fun', 'friendships', 'fantasies' and 'fears' children could not help but be aware that the status of their parents, and hence their own, was measured against such community yardsticks of 'wealth', 'ownership of goods and property' or a privileged position in church or community affairs. Children also learnt that they were 'judged' by their hand-me-down clothes, the income and employment of their parent(s) and their type of housing and neighbourhood. Children learnt very quickly how they 'measured up' and to 'whom'. Some, like Coralie Green, learnt they could offset a perceived lack of 'social status' by 'doing well' at school. Others, like Anne Tonkin, seized opportunities as they arose:

Margaret: Did you mix with families like the Elders and the Bonythons (in Stirling)?

Anne: No. Some of them were friendly enough. Lady Bonython would have been the nicest one. She was a very friendly sort of person. But they were people who just socialised amongst themselves - had their own parties and entertained a lot.

Margaret: It must have been 'interesting' living close to these people and yet not being invited to be a part of it?

Anne: No. You wouldn't be part of them at all. We often played up in Barr-Smith's garden because Nell, my friend, her father was the head gardener - we went to school together. And when the Barr-Smith's weren't in residence, we'd go up. Their garden was beautiful. Up there now, its a shambles - its a shame. We'd have cubby houses under the trees.<sup>84</sup>

All of the interviewees actively positioned themselves as belonging to a particular 'class' and placed themselves in their communities according to their self-designation. Some, like Molly Dutton, Margaret Kenny and Kathleen McLean 'supposed' they were 'middle to upper class', others, like Bert Smalley, said his family was 'definitely working class'. Yet, as their narratives revealed, all of these men and women ascribed to themselves subject positions well beyond the narrow inscriptive 'norms' of a 'class' position. As children they moved in, and through, various adult designations of religious beliefs, political affiliations and 'class' battles and internalised the attendant contradictions in various forms.

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84 OHI., Anne Tonkin.



While all interviewees were aware of the political allegiances of their fathers, which usually meant also that of their mothers, very few children were involved in political discussions unless their families were seen to be outside of the 'norm' - for example, Irish Catholics, German Lutherans, Salvation Army adherents or lay missionaries'.<sup>85</sup> For children of these families, politics and religious issues were frequently to take on a similar ideological hue. For most children, however, overt political induction was not perceived to be one of their rites of passage. Even in the midst of the Depression, children's gaze was on their own interactions within their immediate communities.

As the 1930s drew to a close, disruption to the family walks, shopping expeditions, visits to the Botanical Gardens to listen to the speakers in Speaker's Corner, to the beach, or picnics at Long Gully, or any one of numerous shared activities, came from an unexpected source - children's organised sport and the influence of manufactured toys marketed specifically for children's sole use, or with their peers. As the great open spaces were built on, and suburbs and big country centres developed, children were more closely superintended. As the rituals of schooling came to dominate the lives of children, the school playground began to assume an importance never before experienced. School team sports were utilised to instill 'discipline' and 'pride' in children, and normalisation practices of educators were rigorously pursued, via a battery of standardised tests. The new construct, 'school child', ushered in different measuring sticks from those used in the community.

That it did not stop the young from finding 'safe' places to experiment with smoking cane cigarettes or, in Tilly Simpson's case, a 'roll-your-own packed with manure', and making themselves violently ill in the process, or from stealing the fruit from neighbours' trees and pelting unsuspecting passers-by, or, like Adelene Venables, '**sliding under the**

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<sup>85</sup> Eileen O'Loughlin was particularly 'brought up' on her parents' Liberal party 'beliefs' to the point of reading the newspapers' accounts of Parliamentary debates'; Veronica Sladdin's father involved her family in Labor Party meetings; German-Lutherans, such as the Linke and Schubert family, were concerned to keep state and religious affiliation totally separate; and Coralie Green's parents were politically active to the point of her mother, Ruth Ravenscroft, standing for a seat in the Senate, as an Independent. Disrupting religio-political hegemony was a factor for many families who were situated as other to the dominant Anglo-élite.

tent to see the circus - the only time I ever got to go', is a tribute to the resilience and resistances of 'individuals'<sup>86</sup>. Controlling the 'bodies' of children was, and is, problematic. Corporeality is in itself a construct, be it 'material', 'metaphysical' or 'morphological'. Yet, it is to precisely such mechanisms and apparatus of 'bodily' control - temporal, spatial and motor, that I now turn - that purpose-built, adult designated site of 'experience' - 'the school'.

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<sup>86</sup> QHI., Tilly Simpson; Adelene Venables.

**SECTION THREE : CHANGING CONSTRUCTS**

## CHAPTER FIVE : 'SCHOOL(ING)' : THE 'REAL' WORK OF THE CHILD.

The business of childhood was to be schooled.<sup>1</sup>

Children are a modern invention, they used to be part of the family.<sup>2</sup>

While an analysis of the disparate forces at work in the construction of mass school systems in western societies in the nineteenth century usually informs and/or pre-figures explanations of compulsory schooling in Australia, the focus of this thesis, and of this chapter in particular, is not to re-cast, in any depth, such accounts.<sup>3</sup> The origins of state schooling systems are best analysed in/and on their own accounts. However, if one is to understand the massive attempts to re-formulate children as future self-governing modern citizens of the emergent twentieth century, one needs some understanding of the earlier notions underpinning such transformations of subjectivity. What follows is an attempt to explore merely a small part of the accessible terrain.

It is somewhat obvious to state that the discourse of schooling is an historical artefact. It is less obvious that once an historical artefact is displaced from its original setting one can only gain a partial sense of the cultural webs it served to sustain. This is further problematised in that the language of the present is imposed on descriptions of schooling practices of the past. In attempting to 'prise loose' some of the processes that shaped the pedagogic topography of compulsory schooling of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in South Australia, it has recently come to my attention that in privileging the

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<sup>1</sup> A popular phrase used during discussions relating to full compulsory education, cited by Kerry Wimshurst 'Street Children and School Attendance in South Australia, 1886-1915'. M.Ed. Thesis, The Flinders University of South Australia, 1979, p.59.

<sup>2</sup> Joe Benjamin, The 'pioneer' of the 'adventure playground', cited in Colin Ward, The Child in the City. Pantheon Books, New York, 1978.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Albertus Wigman 'Childhood and Compulsory Education in South Australia : A Cultural-Political Analysis'. Unpublished Ph.D. in the discipline of Anthropology, University of Adelaide, May 1989.

lineage of the modern school as emanating from nineteenth century England, much earlier forms of mass state schooling in Europe have been elided from Australian accounts.<sup>4</sup>

English-speaking readers have been partially aware of the need for European analyses for years. Michel Foucault, in Discipline and Punish, has detailed the critical role of the aristocratic Catholic priest, Jean Baptiste de la Salle, in the emergence of a separate system of elementary schooling in seventeenth century France. De la Salle's The Conduct of Christian Schools was a 220 page school manual which projected not only the daily attendance of pupils but advocated that their early movement was to be accounted for in time and space. It was, in fact, a manifesto for the organisation of schooling as a socially efficient and self-regulating educational 'machine'.<sup>5</sup> Foucault claims that not only did De la Salle's plans bring an unprecedented 'technical rationality' to schooling but they also provided, via their attention to detail, a model for eighteenth-century economics, medicine and military theory.<sup>6</sup> Recently, David Hamilton, in Towards a Theory of Schooling, wrote that 'De la Salle's attention to detail can be explained in fideistic terms : a life ruled by constant attention to minutiae was held to be a better demonstration of faith than a life punctuated by occasional acts of heroism'.<sup>7</sup> This interweaving of a standpoint (fideism) which held that belief in God was demonstrated through faith, not reason, within De la Salle's model of a school organisation, which focused on the dispositions of time and space where students are accounted for at all times, is strongly evocative of the structuring of time and space in the pedagogy in a much earlier, less well

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4 See Ian Davey and Pavla Miller, 'Patriarchal Transformations, Schooling and State Formation' unpublished paper presented at Social Science History Association Conference, New Orleans, U.S.A., September 1991 which outlines critical omissions.

5 See Michel Foucault. Discipline and Punish : The Birth of the Prison. Trans. Alan Sheridan, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1979, pp.135-169. Originally published in 1975 as Surveilleur et punir : Naissance de la prison.

6 Ibid., p.140.

7 David Hamilton. Towards a Theory of Schooling. London, The Falmer Press, 1989, p.68.

documented, form of mass state schooling which emerged in the small Lutheran principalities of sixteenth century Europe.<sup>8</sup>

As Davey and Miller illuminate, it is on the state churches of the Protestant reformation and the absolutist states of central Europe that one must concentrate in tracing the genealogy of the role of education in state formation:

It was there that the first attempts to build state school systems originated in the Lutheran principalities of the sixteenth century and it was in the 're-feudalised' absolutist states of the eighteenth century, most notably Prussia, that the modern form of state schooling associated with nation states was established.<sup>9</sup>

Sharing a desire to transform the character of their subjects with De la Salle's Fideist pedagogy, the Lutheran principalities went beyond this and also sought a radical re-ordering of familial functions. Following arguments outlined in James Van Horn Melton's Absolutism and the eighteenth-century origins of compulsory schooling in Prussia and Austria, Davey and Miller detail the movement known as Pietism, a late seventeenth and eighteenth century reform movement within Lutheranism, which sought to redefine the manner in which power was displayed and exercised. 'Central to this refinement was a shift in the technology of the social discipline, whereby the locus of coercion was to be transferred from outside to inside the individual'.<sup>10</sup> The similarity of Foucault's delineation of the shift from external coercion to self-discipline as mechanisms for regulating social behaviour, as outlined in Discipline and Punish, is utterly striking.

It is particularly significant that the Pietist educational reforms predate the much vaunted reform programs (which are a Pietist legacy) of the nineteenth century in England,

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<sup>8</sup> I first cited this important focus on Lutheranism and the origins of mass state schooling in Davey and Miller 'Patriarchal Transformations, Schooling and State Formation' who note that this model of education is outlined in Gerald Strauss' Luther's House of Learning : indoctrination of the young in the German Reformation. John Hopkins University Press, 1978. I am grateful to Dr. Davey for pointing out this critical link to me.

<sup>9</sup> Davey and Miller 'Patriarchal Transformations, Schooling and State Formation', p.12.

<sup>10</sup> James Van Horn Melton Absolutism and the eighteenth-century origins of compulsory schooling in Prussia and Austria. Cambridge University Press, 1988, p.xxiii.

which culminated in the New Education movement which had such a profound effect on Australian education in the early decades of the twentieth century. As Melton delineates in Prussia and Austria, and as Foucault delineated in France, the shift in resonance from coerced obedience to freely rendered and the exercise of authority through love rather than force, is re-calibrated in the English reform movements I discuss in this chapter. The omniscient eye of God is replaced with the all-seeing gaze of the empathetic teacher and schooling becomes a critical vehicle in cultivating the moral autonomy of the subject. It is upon the Pietist terrain that I wish to chart more recent cultural and moral realignments which have given 'new' visions of the state, the social and the self.

Building on the legacy of the seventeenth and eighteenth century in Europe, nineteenth century British moves towards the policing of social space, which first targeted the moral dangers of the streets, laid the foundations for the articulation and shaping of the construct 'the school' and its day-to-day practices of 'schooling' in South Australia. It did so within a space in which techniques of pastoral surveillance were systemised and multiplied according to a logic whereby the moral and physical well-being of whole populations would be secured through the moral supervision of individuals. Clean hands, clean slates, clean books, clean hearts, clean bodies and clean minds was to become an unwritten ideological precept. Religious rites and rituals of 'cleansing' and 'rebirth' were incorporated in school rites and rituals. The conjoining of religion and capitalist schooling was to be a symbolic conjoining of the individual body and the body politic. A regular part of morning assemblies, along with saluting the flag, was 'handkerchief drill', where young children, whose handkerchiefs were to be pinned to their clothing, were taught in structured sequence, how to hold, blow and wipe. Along with inspecting the length and cleanliness of their nails, children in public schools were regularly inspected for head lice. Only the 'fit' and 'clean' could enter into the doors beyond.

The constructs 'school', 'schooling' and 'schoolchild' are, following Foucault, a critical site in charting the transformations from one set of power relations to another. The organisation of the school has always been demonstrably anchored on two, apparent, contradictions. The abolition of coercion and the encouragement of self-expression which was

to be a vehicle whereupon a profusion of individual characters would be permitted to show themselves, and yet, simultaneously, this organisation would be deployed as a mechanism for subjecting these characters to new general norms of development.

This chapter seeks to delineate ways in which the 'normalising judgement' of the technologies of bio-power was to situate the linguistic and social construct of 'school child' within a formal juridical framework of laws and regulations whilst defining a range of 'natural' processes of biological and psychological development. It also seeks to present reconstructed memories of children's responses in coming to know themselves as a 'school child':

In a sense, the power of normalization imposes homogeneity; but it individualizes by making it possible to measure gaps, to determine levels, to fix specialities and to render the differences useful, by fitting them one to another. It is easy to understand how the power of the norm functions within a system of formal equality, since within a homogeneity which is the rule, the norm introduces, as a useful imperative and as a result of measurement, all the shading of individual differences.<sup>11</sup>

Compulsory education and the consequent transformation of familialism it effected can be read as a potent vehicle in eliciting the private pursuit of self-interest and in establishing and 'validating' such individualism as a general hegemonising factor in culture.

Building on much earlier European attempts to anchor governance inside the self, the school became a focus in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century for the amplification of techniques and apparatus of intervention for regulating and institutionalising the individual in the family, at play, on the street corner, on the playground, at the 'boys' and 'girls' clubs, and so on. Social sciences and social administration developed in a mutually productive relationship. But, as articulated in reconstructed memory, the transformation of subjectivity is not produced by overt external forces but is formed by a process which treats neither 'society' nor an individual as a privileged beginning, but takes 'interior' and 'exterior' as problematic categories. It is in this sense that the notion of myth can serve to link the lives of the individuals with the histories of collectivities, for schooling is inherently

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11 Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish : the birth of the Prison. p.184.



tension laden, and, as such, normative visions are articulated and interpellated reflexively.

### Constructing the 'school child'.

The benchmark for genealogies of South Australian educational discourses/practice is usually posited in the introduction and extension of 'compulsory' education from 1875 onwards. As many writers of South Australian social history have focused on compulsory education as the vehicle of the separation of children from the world of paid and unpaid labour, with its attendant shift in patriarchal familial relations, it is not my intention (nor is it within the scope of this thesis) to elaborate on the Act in any detail.<sup>12</sup>

However, it is critical to delineate that it is not merely as a means of socialisation or social control that the 1875 Act was ratified, but as a way of securing public morality and preventing crime in order to establish and form a population with good habits through the instrument of useful discursive principles in an effort to secure a moral foundation for governmental authority. Towards the end of the nineteenth century (and most certainly after the Education Act of 1915) schooling began to exist specifically as a means for regulating the relations between social classes by forming an instrument of modification of a class culture, that is, the very conditions which serve to define a class in its essential traits. A set of techniques and apparatus were posited in schools, specifically adapted to class, age and gender characteristics, which formed together with other conditions of a class' existence to present a new régime for the training of the young members of that class in the 'correct' way 'to go'. Later, this normalisation was to be extended to regulating the behaviour of all children per se in the twentieth century.

The inculcation of good habits was to prove difficult, initially, when the Education Act of 1875 was neither free nor fully compulsory. Children between the ages of seven to thirteen

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<sup>12</sup> For an excellent chronological delineation of public schooling in South Australia, see Pavla Miller, Long Division. State Schooling in South Australian Society. Wakefield Press, Netley, 1986.

years were compelled to attend school with a minimum attendance of seventy days per half year. Children who lived beyond a certain radius were exempted. Fees were 6d. a week, although exemptions for 'poverty' existed. In 1878 the minimum compulsory attendance was amended to thirty-five days in each quarter of approximately fifty days. In 1892 education was made free, with some provisos.<sup>13</sup> In 1893, all schools with pupils in excess of one hundred were required to establish an extra class, fifth grade, with set examinations, and from 1898 all schools with an enrolment of more than forty pupils were obliged to establish fifth grade classes. In 1901, the setting up of sixth grade classes was required on similar lines. For children below the age of seven, infant classes were set up in some schools.

Resistances to this intrusion, based on the need to have children co-operate in familial economic activity, are well documented in 'public' records, such as the following:

The main causes ... affecting the attendance, have been the employment of the children at home during ploughing, hay-making and harvesting operations, and the prevalence of ophthalmia etc. In the Moonta district, owing to continued depression in the copper market, a large number of children has been placed on the free list, and the attendance has been kept up in consequence.<sup>14</sup>

This district (Hindmarsh) is the chief manufacturing one of the colony, and, owing to the comparatively low rate of cottage rents, a considerable number of widows, invalids, poor families and immigrants reside here.... Great trouble has been experienced in dealing with the compulsory clause in the case of children who, in great measure, are the support of the family.<sup>15</sup>

Pavla Miller writes:

At least until the passage of the 1915 Education Act, most families managed to squeeze necessary child labour into the period legally exempted from compulsory attendance. In the city, 'street children' attended school for the minimum legal period only, and spent the remainder of the time seeking casual jobs or helping their parents. In the country, children continued to take time off school to help with the harvest, clearing land, Monday washing, sick brother or new baby. When they did attend school, many boys and girls found their

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13 See Colin Thiele, Grains of Mustard Seed : A Narrative Outline of State Education in South Australia 1875-1975. Government Printer, Adelaide, 1975, pp.11-16.

14 South Australian Parliamentary Papers. (Henceforth referred to as SAPP), 1880, no.44, p.18.

15 *Ibid.*, p.29.

working day lengthened to accommodate the same round of chores as previously, together with a long walk to and from school and attendance at lessons.<sup>16</sup>

That the number of children attending school gradually increased is demonstrable, but so, too, is the fact that many parents obeyed the minimum requirements of the law rather than the Act's ideological precepts. Statistics were garnered to form sites of perception/enunciation forming new ways of making statements about the state of the population:

Year	Average Daily Attendance	Attendance of students of compulsory age
1876	53	N/A
1880	54	72
1885	61	84
1890	61	83
1895	67	85
1900	69	86
1905	71	88
1910	71	82

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Variation in the topography of rural and urban regions was further 'broken down' and viewed as a predisposition of the population of such districts to a corresponding variation in their habits. More schools in the country regions were articulated as an 'urgent' requirement to reformulate 'bad habits'.

Most children left school as soon as they were legally entitled to as the link between school and work, at the turn of the century, was somewhat irrelevant to their future 'employment'.<sup>18</sup> The visibility of young people - and for this read boys, and particularly urban boys, who engaged in sporadic and/or seasonal work, and thus spent many hours on the

<sup>16</sup> Miller, Long Division. p.70.

<sup>17</sup> SAPP, 1876-1910. Reports of the Minister of Education.

<sup>18</sup> See Ian Davey. 'Transitions : School and Work in the Family Economy', Australia 1888. Bulletin no.10, September 1982, p.53.

streets, or in and out of school - generated concern and debate about issues such as juvenile delinquency, truancy and street children, as I have discussed in Chapter Three.

It becomes clear in the reading of 'official' source material that a 'need' was articulated to transform existing childhood practices, the individual body was to become the species body. Consequently, the emergence of the population as an object of knowledge forms a condition of possibility for the formation of domains of political knowledge, based on an analysis of the characteristics of the population and categories within it. To this extent, then, an analysis of domains of political knowledge renders intelligible the formulation of the strategy of educational intervention. The problem for South Australian educators, at the turn of the century, and others similarly concerned with child 'rescue', was how to exert the maximum 'educational' influence, as rapidly as possible, with long term efficacy, over the greatest number of children, with the most efficient machinery of instruction, in order to produce 'useful' habits and an absence of 'false' principles, whilst simultaneously securing the support of the population for the mechanisms adopted.

In 1908 a system of free government secondary education was introduced, building on the tenuous introduction in 1901 and 1906 of post-elementary schooling. Universalisation of education, begun in 1875, could now lay claim to being fully developed, although it took until 1915, with attendance requirements undergoing further tightening, to achieve this massive reordering of children's lives. Among the new and strikingly coercive provisions of the 1915 Education Act was the prohibiting of children from undertaking paid employment on school days. This provision directly struck at 'traditional' patriarchal authority and was implicit in the redefining of familial forms. 'Home', as well as 'school', was to be liberalised and humanised in the process and, as discussed in Chapter Two, women were postulated as the privileged agents. New patriarchal forms evolved.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> See Ian Davey and Pavla Miller 'Patriarchal Transformations, Schooling and State Formation'. In the paper they argue that schooling is connected to transformations of one form of patriarchy into another and trace such transformations as emanating through, and from, the uneven development of mass schooling in Europe since the sixteenth century, focusing, primarily, on the eighteenth century absolutist states of Prussia and Austria and culminating in

The tightening of attendance regulations, which ensured that children between the ages of six and fourteen would attend school everyday, with no time out for casual labour, (with the exception of Harvest Leave for rural children) marked an abrupt change in the patterns and rhythms of working class lives. It also eliminated some other more common nineteenth century practices which had 'lingered on' into the twentieth century. The accompanying of older children to school by younger siblings, whether out of necessity or desire, was one such practice that was soon to cease. Paddy Baker began his schooling at Wolseley, a one-teacher school near the Victorian border, in the south-east of South Australia, in 1903, aged four and a half years:

**My brother was two years older than me. I was four, and because my brother went to school I wanted to. Mother said 'I will see the teacher' and she did, and I went to school. Miss Charrad, the school teacher, was a family friend, and I suppose that's why. I wasn't really on the list but was allowed to come into school. And I used to go to sleep every afternoon on the teacher's lap. She used to nurse me.<sup>20</sup>**

By 1915 the age-graded nature of classes ensured that only children who had reached the age of compulsion occupied school space, although some children over the age of compulsion stayed on in primary schools. The 1915 Act also replaced parents' rights to withdraw children from school permanently, without legal approval. The practice of children like James Porter, who left school in 1910, aged 11 years, to work (delivering telegrams) to support his impoverished widowed mother because: 'She wanted us to leave school as soon as we could, so we left'<sup>21</sup> was to become of State, rather than primarily of familial concern. It became much harder for children to contribute to the family economy, although, out of school hours, a significant number of children continued to work selling newspapers, race cards, at the

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state forms of compulsory education in the late 19th century which they associate with the triumph of the male breadwinner wage form.

20 QHI., Paddy Baker.

21 S.A. Speaks. Oral History Interview. Mr. James Porter.

markets, and, of course, at numerous, unpaid chores. The construct 'school child' was now predicated on an age hierarchy, resulting in the dependency model of childhood.<sup>22</sup>

Constructing the 'experts' : The Pedagogy of 'play' as 'work'.

The emergence of professionals, including teachers, who underpinned the reconstruction of the State School, owed much to the claimed knowledge of the mental phenomena becoming available from the scientific study of 'the child'. In this mode, reformers were able to sustain the conscious campaign which they had instigated to reconstitute the school as a major environmental determinant of the physical, mental and moral fitness of the child and the race. Attention was turned to children of all classes.

While securing the good habits of working class children was the harbinger of the 1875 Education Act, the introduction of fully compulsory State education in 1915, with the reorganisation of the Education Department into three divisions - primary, secondary and technical, was to have more wide-ranging effects. The separation of children from the now-adult world of work, initially aimed at children of the working class, provided transformations for all children. It increased the length of childhood dependency beyond the age of puberty and transformed the role(s) between the 'individual' and 'the social'. The creation of the social involved the construction of new sets of tasks and duties for parents and children of varied backgrounds. As discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis, a realignment of 'public' and 'private' space was imbricated in new politico-juridical 'norms' encompassing 'the family'. From 1915, not only working class parents were surveilled according to new educative and hygienic norms, but 'bourgeois' families were also encompassed within discourse/practices of the educational/career prospects of their children. Accompanying the intensification of the

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<sup>22</sup> See Ian Davey, 'Past and Present. The Transformation of Age Relations'. Educational Research in the 80's. Australian Association for Research in Education, Brisbane, 1982, pp.445-49.

personal sphere was the expansion of the sphere of public administration in a overarching, intense and reciprocating relationship.<sup>23</sup>

From the massive nineteenth century reordering of working class children's largely pre-industrial conception of time, discipline, space and knowledge, via the pedagogic apparatuses of the 'compulsory school', early twentieth century educationists were poised to analyse not merely the morals and habits of the child but 'look deeply into the mechanisms of the wondrous mind of the child'<sup>24</sup> and study, as 'experts', the complex adjustments needed for the successful completion of each stage of growth. It was tellingly stressed that 'all undesirable inheritances' could be counteracted by the expert, skilful teacher who 'took account of' inherited nervous tendencies which set the bounds of the rate of mental growth.<sup>25</sup> Argument focused on learning, not by rote, but by healthy activity where the child's initiative was not to be stifled. To successfully foster the child's mind, the child's body must not be overlooked. Outdoor exercises and muscular development for boys, with less strenuous exercises for the future mothers of the race were postulated as essential if physical debility was to be minimised, or overcome, and children's 'savage' or 'nomadic' habits were to be transformed into more 'civilised' domains. The aim of the teacher was to educate the 'whole child'.<sup>26</sup> Various writings underpinned this ideological notion:

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23 See Ian Hunter, Culture and government. The Emergence of Literary Education. The Macmillan Press, Ltd., London, 1988. Especially Chapter 2, pp.33-69, for a discussion of these ideas.

24 For an overview of this development see Australian Journal of Education. July 15th, 1905, p.8, and John Smyth, 'The new Attitude to Education', in Australian Journal of Education, August 1st, 1903, p.8.

25 W.J. Colville. The Value of Fröebel's Philosophy and the Kindergarten System of Education. Adelaide, 1900, p.10.

26 See Frank Tate. 'Ideals in Modern Education'. Cited in C.R. Long (ed) The Aims and Work of the Education Department. Melbourne, 1906, p.33.

In the near future I see the coming of the day of better and brighter things, when even those who have not watched the trend of the educational movement will also admit that they, with us, can see the coming of a great light.<sup>27</sup>

Education rightly understood and rightly administered was at the heart of all true national greatness.<sup>28</sup>

A tidal wave of unrest is at present sweeping through the English Educational world.<sup>29</sup>

The movement is variously known as Technical Education, practical Education, Industrial Education, Hand and Eye Education, Manual Training, the New Education, and by many other names.<sup>30</sup>

Unlike colonial schooling, the twentieth-century school was to become more than a machinery of instructions, it was to be redefined as a machine for the moral, physical, mental and spiritual development of the child. This necessitated a redefinition in the role of the teacher within this machinery, changing the mode and the terrain of pedagogic interventions. As well, it institutionalised class and gender-specific divisions whilst attempting to 'normalise' and 'individualise' childhood experiences.

Educational theorists relied not just on the emergent medicalisation of child-rearing ideas<sup>31</sup> but promoted the earlier works of Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Fröebel which placed great emphasis on what could be achieved in the improvement of human behaviour by focusing on the young.<sup>32</sup> Rousseau argued that if parents could be prevented from brutalising their children,

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27 South Australian Education Gazette. (Henceforth referred to as SAEG.) Hon. T.H. Brooker, 1901, p.147.

28 SAEG, 1901, p.142. An address by Frank Tate, then principal of the Victorian Training College (later Director of Education in Victorian in 1902) to the annual Teachers Conference of S.A. (1901), focusing on the New Education and the 'Forward Movement' in England.

29 F.W. Brereton cited in R.J.W. Selleck The New Education : The English Background 1870-1914. Melbourne, Pitman, 1968, p.104.

30 W. Catton Grasby, Our Public Schools. Hussey and Gillingham, Adelaide, 1891, p.2.

31 This is more fully discussed in Chapters 2 and 7 of this thesis.

32 See Jean Rousseau, Emile. London, Penguin, 1974, first edition, 1762. J.H. Pestalozzi, How Gertrude Teaches Her Children. An Attempt to Help Mothers to Teach their own Children and an Account of the Method. First edition, 1801. Reprinted in D.N. Robinson, (ed)



instilling into them the divisive and irrational doctrines demanded by the Church, then mankind which was born free and with infinite potential for goodness, would begin to progress towards earthly perfection.<sup>33</sup> Pestalozzi postulated that the Church denied 'the common man' enlightenment through fear of subversive ideas whereas the extension of schooling to all classes was the most appropriate way to replace 'an intemperate and criminal workforce' with an honest, diligent and contented one.<sup>34</sup> All three reformers shared a commitment to the intellectual development and moral potential of 'the child'. By developing their 'sense perceptions, children could be expertly guided towards an imbrication of 'desired' moral values and skills, 'voluntarily', and at an almost subconscious level. Allowing for a considerable time lapse in the English publication of their works, and their subsequent distillation to Australia, the secular nature of these theories appealed to the emerging secular expert in the pedagogical 'science' of the study of the 'whole' child.

The secularisation of education, encoded in the 1875 Act, privileged the teacher's role in the socialisation of the child, at the expense of the child's parents. Further modification of patriarchal - familial relationships occurred when teachers and educationists argued for an extension and expansion of State educational facilities for older post-compulsory children, based on the 'need' for children's greater direction and guidance during the newly-understood 'period of adolescence'. Fourteen-year-olds were not to be considered adults. The views of G. Stanley Hall, as to the critical importance of the period from fourteen to nineteen, were promoted as a way of containing 'wayward youth'. If the establishment of primary schooling was argued successfully along the lines of securing the 'good' moral habits of its citizenry,

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Psychometrics and Educational Psychology. Vol.II, J.H. Pestalozzi, Washington, University Publications of America, 1977, and Friedrich Fröebel, The Education of Man. First edition, 1826. Reprinted in D.N. Robinson, (ed), Psychometrics and Educational Psychology. Vol.I, J.F. Herbert, F. Fröebel, Washington, University Publications of America, 1977.

33 Rousseau, Emile. pp.5-10.

34 Pestalozzi, How Gertrude Teaches Her Children, pp.126, 169-170.

then public morality, safety and social stability would be further served by the extension of technical and secondary education. The education of an older child for an 'honest vocation' and 'responsible citizenship' was to become a necessity.<sup>35</sup> State secondary education, then, was to become representative of a new form of the relation between families and the state and a new technology of power relations in South Australian society; a technology which proclaimed a universal norm of not just 'childhood', but 'youth', and 'judged' the families on their 'ability' and willingness to conform to this norm. Self interest was to become legitimated, privatised and individualised.<sup>36</sup>

My dwelling on nineteenth century theorists at length in this chapter is not accidental. The promulgation of a child-centred pedagogy calls/called for a 'purpose-built' teacher as much as it called for a 'purpose-built' space. The inter-relation of 'female' doxas of nature/nurture with the emergent teaching profession were to have repercussions which are still being experienced by female early childhood educators today. The continuing reification of nineteenth century 'thinkers' has to be re-cast if the shackles of the all-seeing, all loving 'mother figure' is to be deconstructed as a given. Nineteenth century theorists continue to pervade the consciousness and unconsciousness of contemporary curriculum writing and praxis. The prison house of 'love' encapsulates teacher and child alike. Just as the legacy of Pietism is observable, so too is the legacy of the child reformers.

The middle-class model of the protected liberation of 'childhood' and 'youth' and the exhortation for 'self-interest' was exemplified in the New Education movement. Originating in England around the 1870s it was adapted in differing modes by Australian educational reformers about the time of Federation. In England its articulation emerged from amongst the earlier works of such reformers as Samuel Wilderspin, David Stow, James Kay-Shuttleworth,

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35 Mary Carpenter. Reformatory Schools. (For the children of the Perishing and Dangerous Classes and for Juvenile Offenders.) London, C. Gilpin, 1851. Reprinted 1968. Woburn Press, p.76.

36 For the construction of 'studenthood' see D.S. Snow. The State, Youth and Schooling : The Social Construction of Student-hood in New South Wales. 1788-1948. Ph.D. thesis, the University of Wollongong, 1989.

Mary Carpenter and J.C. Symons and, in essence, was a move away from the constant surveillance (in its primitive form) and ceaseless activity of the monitorial system to a pedagogy based on covert normative regulation.

According to Clarke, Samuel Wilderspin, a leader of the infant school movement in England, and David Stow, a religious-philanthropist, were both instrumental in using mechanisms of normalisation, redeployed in the personal register, as an apparatus of pastoral surveillance and moral training, and both posited the relationship of the teacher to the student, as critical.<sup>37</sup> In his Training System, David Stow delineated, at length, how hierarchial observation of the monitorial schoolroom was to be reinvested in the moral observation of the teacher.<sup>38</sup>

Pedagogical disciplines were to be re-organised around a new sympathetic relationship between children and a specially-trained teacher, a 'call' closely mirrored by W. Catton Grasby, a prominent educator, and his followers several decades later in South Australia.<sup>39</sup>

David Stow wrote that his concern for the moral training of the children of the poor resulted from his concern for the moral and physical 'well-being' of Glasgow's street children. His articulation of this concern was to form a Sunday school, which evolved later into a day school, to rescue the children from their 'pitiful surroundings'. He inscribed:

...my ears and eyes were shocked several times a day by the profanity, indecency, filth and vice, which were exhibited by hordes of young and old, and even infants, who were growing up pests to society, and ruined in themselves, for whose souls or bodies no one seemed to care, and whose wretchedness was enough to disgrace a professedly Christian community.<sup>40</sup>

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37 For a useful introduction to the works of Wilderspin and Stow, see Karen Clarke, 'Public and private children : infant education in the 1820s and 1830s' in Caroline Steedman, Cathy Urwin and Valerie Walkerdine (eds) Language, Gender and Childhood. History Workshop Series. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985, Chapter 4, pp.74-87.

38 David Stow, The Training System, the Moral Training School, and the Normal Seminary. London, Longman, Brown and Green, 1850. First published, Glasgow 1836. Eleven editions are believed to have been issued between 1836 and 1859.

39 W. Catton Grasby, Our Public Schools.

40 Stow, The Training System. p.124.

Stow believed that against such forces of the street parental guidance and pastoral visitation were powerless. The child 'may not care for the Sunday instructions of his father or mother, but cares for and readily copies the language and bad practices of his street companions. The parents may teach, but companions in reality train'.<sup>41</sup> The sympathy of companionship in what is evil should be opposed, then, by its antithesis - the sympathy of companionship in what is good. Thus, Stow envisaged a new role for the teacher, one who could assume the attributes of parent, spiritual guide and friend, engaging the children's sympathies and bring the companionship of the street into the moralising space of the school. Engaging the children through their play would allow them to reveal their 'true selves'.

Wilderspin also privileged the central pedagogical role of children's play and stressed the importance of the provision of a playground:

The playground may be compared to the world, where the little children are left to themselves there it may be seen what effects their education has produced, for if any of the children be fond of fighting and quarrelling it is here that they will do it, and this gives the Master an opportunity of giving them seasonable advice, as to the impropriety of such conduct; whereas if kept in school ... these evil inclinations, with many others, will never manifest themselves, until they go into the street, and consequently the master would have no opportunity of attempting a cure.<sup>42</sup>

James Kay-Shuttleworth's pauper training school also lauded the 'quality' of the teachers' one-to-one relationship within the school, citing it as critical to the mechanisms of the school. The quality of the relationship of the teacher with each child was seen as conditional upon the qualities of the teacher himself (sic). For the mechanism to work, it required the teacher to have special skills and attributes. According to Kay-Shuttleworth,

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41 Ibid., p.62.

42 Samuel Wilderspin, Infant Education. London, Simpkin and Marshal, 1825 (3rd Edition), pp.201-202. Cited in Steedman, Urwin and Walkerdine (eds), Language, Gender and Childhood. pp.76-77.

what the teacher needed was 'Christian faith and charity', a spirit of 'self-sacrifice' and a 'tender concern for the well-being of children'.<sup>43</sup>

Apparent in Kay-Shuttleworth's program, according to Hunter and other recent commentators, was a dual concern - the religio-philanthropic concern, along Stowian lines, with the moral well-being of individuals, and a concern along governmental lines with the moral and physical condition of the population:

I think that the opportunities for moral training among children during their usual associations in periods of recreation, and also while they are trained in school, are greatly increased when they are in contact with numbers: and that although it may require a larger amount of intelligence and superior vigilance and activity on the part of the master, yet his opportunities, not merely of inculcating moral lessons, but forming good habits, are increased by the accidents which occur when numbers are assembled, and which develop the peculiarities of character, and especially the moral tendencies of different characters.<sup>44</sup>

Like Stow, Kay-Shuttleworth wished to install a pedagogy which would 'develop the peculiarities of character, and especially the moral tendencies of different characters'. A single formative régime could be established within the purpose-built school. The absorption of pastoral techniques into the new machinery of government produced a pedagogical apparatus whose first target was the children of the working class. Later, in the pedagogies of the New Education, this apparatus formed part of a powerful governmental program operating in the new domain of the social, a sphere of regulated interventions into the body of whole populations. Mary Carpenter's ragged and reformatory schools, in mid-nineteenth century Britain, for 'criminal children' and 'children of the dangerous classes' were to be developed upon the concept of 'Christian love', which Carpenter postulated as a necessary basis for all

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43 James Kay-Shuttleworth. Four Periods of Public Education, as Reviewed in 1832, 1839, 1846 and 1862. Reprinted, London, The Harvester Press, 1973. James Kay-Shuttleworth. Memorandum on Popular Education, 1868. Reprinted, London, Woburn Books, 1969. Both these texts stress the critical role of the teacher as a deployer of, and exemplifier of, the technology of individualising moral supervision. Through non-coercion appropriate normative behaviour would be internalised.

44 British Parliamentary Papers A, 1838, vol.6, p.532. In, Reports from Select Committees on the Education of the Poorer Classes 1834-38. Shannon, Irish University Press, 1970. Cited by Ian Hunter, Culture and Government, pp.39-40.

education. 'Love' combined with a missionary zeal was imperative if children were to be transferred from the dangerous moral space of the street. Under the New Education pedagogy, 'Christian love' was replaced by secular love, and 'missionary zeal' by teachers' expert knowledge of the 'needs' of the children.

The works of Jelinger C. Symons were also reworked under the auspices of the New Education. Symons, in his book, Tactics for the Times as regards the condition and treatment of the Dangerous Classes, advocated industrial training, based on the practical needs of the labouring class, as a way of securing the attendance of children of the 'criminally inclined'. What is significant in Symon's work was his delineation and targeting of a specific population, in topographical locations, which he located according to an extensive twelve year study of the national British crime statistics, in an effort to account for the conditions which produced crime. This contribution of an analysis of population statistics, in an effort to account for the conditions which produced crime, provided the basis for classifications of the normal in many domains relating to the social regulation of the population, that is, scientific rationalism. Allied to manual education, the identification of the 'dangerous classes' as a unit in themselves was significant in introducing new ways of reading the population.

The common link amongst these five nineteenth century British reformers, Wilderspin, Stow, Kay-Shuttleworth, Carpenter and Symons, and their contribution to the reforms of the New Education movement(s) in late nineteenth century England and early twentieth century South Australia, is their advocacy of a sympathetic teacher and their articulation of a change in the terrain and mode of pedagogic intervention. Of prime concern was the reformation of a set of dispositions within classes of children, and they sought to develop these children's moral, intellectual and practical understandings. Based on Christian love, the children would come to love one another and therefore be predisposed to love knowledge, order, labour and cleanliness. These objectives were to be achieved through the children's relationship with their teacher. Mary Carpenter proposed that the fundamental

role of the teacher was love for his (sic) pupils as it was from this love that the power to form or change their dispositions emerged.<sup>45</sup>

The techniques of social control and regulation proposed by these British reformers were 'taken up' in various ways - the prime mode being that of the compulsory school, a site where the moral habits of the population could be normalised. Promoting understanding was to prove more efficacious than overtly attempting to reformulate habits. Social and moral regulation was to be 'individualised' covertly and liberally. Rational understanding, based on a Rousseauian study of nature, wherein the child's potential can be realised 'naturally' and 'normally', would be best achieved by grouping the children in school by age and fitting the lesson to particular ages, through the mechanisms of love. Within the pedagogic forms of the New Education, this love was a platonic not passionate love that was itself to become, later, along with other aspects of the child's development, an object of medicalisation and hygienisation.

David Hamilton has suggested that the popularity of this new system of education in England was partly due to its resolution of certain contradictions, by being all things to all parties:

Its 'equalised classification', for instance, resonated with new ideas about the social structure of society; its oral methods signalled a rejection of book-based learning: its 'familiar' (or conversational) style met utilitarian (or rationalist) calls for 'understanding' as well as 'memorisation': and above all, its 'interrogative' discipline, satisfied those whose concern was to ensure the 'perpetual employment' of the children of the labouring classes.<sup>46</sup>

The transformation in the form of pedagogic regulation was neither simply nor easily achieved. It was simultaneously a discursive transformation and a transformation of practices and apparatus. Within this new form of scientifically produced regulation, with its emergent

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45 Mary Carpenter Reformatory Schools, p.76.

46 D. Hamilton 'On simultaneous instruction and early evolution of class teaching'. Mimeo, University of Glasgow, 1981, p.6. Cited in Julian Henriques et al., Changing the Subject. Psychology, social regulation and subjectivity. London, Methuen, 1984, p.168.

twin foci of child development and mental measurement, the 'new' education, both in its English origins and Australian derivation, took its first tentative steps.

Children were established as proper objects of the scientific gaze and, with the development of educational apparatuses which distinguished between those of 'normal' and 'sub-normal' intelligence, were to be educated accordingly. Such objectification of the child allowed for the possibility of a science and a pedagogy based on a model naturally occurring development, which could be observed, normalised and regulated. The fitness of future adults could thus be assured.

Darwin, often credited with the origins of the 'child study movement' with his study of his son, "A biographical sketch of an infant" (1840 and 1887) had posited the observation of human children in the same bracket as 'other species'. A number of studies followed on from Darwin's and most were conducted by scientists on their own children - William Preyer's The Mind of the Child (1881) and G. Stanley Hall's The Contents of Children's Minds on Entering School (1883) being two of the most widely discussed works in England and the colonies. What is critical to an understanding of the New Education, particularly in its South Australian context, is that children were being singled out for scientific study for the first time and the discourses which produced children as the object of the study were drawn from biology and topography, and everyday-life 'commonsense'.

Within the English context of the New Education movement, Selleck argued for its analysis along six main areas:- The Practical Educationists; The Social Reformer; The Naturalist; the Herbartarian; The Scientific Educationist and the Moral Educationist.<sup>47</sup> Elements and distillations of all these 'areas' can be found in the South Australian setting at the turn of this century:

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47 Selleck, New Education. pp.169-207.



My ideal of a true Australian is that he (sic) should be well equipped by education and science that he may get the best results from his hands in the field, garden, factory mart, shop or street.<sup>48</sup>

...practical agriculture, woodwork, metal, clay modelling, plaster work, cardboard work, book binding, brush making basket work, straw plaiting, netting and (girls only) cooking and fancy needlework.<sup>49</sup>

South Australia is now part of the greater Australian Commonwealth, and should no longer hesitate in laying the foundation of an efficient citizen army, and the foundation should be laid in the ordinary state school.<sup>50</sup>

(Education) was concerned with the development of inherent capabilities - capability which would, if developed, make life not only more productive in the strictly material sense, but allow us to live our lives on a higher plane together.<sup>51</sup>

A complete rearrangement of the curriculum would at once entice interest and involve study of principles, methods and subjects, especially if the revision were based on a correlation of history and literature with geography, and the teachers were allowed some choice and freedom.<sup>52</sup>

It is well known, however, that the physical interest tremendously modifies the sense of fatigue. This is so for animals as well as men (sic), and for children. Here we come face to face with one of the most interesting problems that offers itself for solution. 'How can interest reduce the painful consciousness of physical and mental fatigue?' That there is a very real reduction of weariness in certain cases is quite beyond dispute.<sup>53</sup>

...a teacher recognises the necessity of studying children, soul, mind and body, and to do this with good purpose she (sic) must be endowed with abundant love,

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- 48 SAEG, March, 1901, p.147. Article by the Minister of Education, The Hon. T.H. Brooks, stressing the benefits of practical education.
- 49 SAEG, January, 1895, p.28. Discussion of the Naas Sloyd work in manual training.
- 50 SAEG, January, 1901, p.50. An articulation of social reform.
- 51 *Ibid.*, p.143.
- 52 SAEG, July 12th, 1902, p.112 Inspector Neale addressing teachers on Herbert's five basic steps of ideation.
- 53 Paper by G.H. Knibbs, State Commissioner of education in N.S.W., 'Some Aspects of Child Study', read by Andrew Scott at the Annual Teacher's Conference, 1903. Cited in SAEG, 1903, p.108.

with a quick accurate judgement, with infinite patience and tact, and she must have attained to a scientific exactness... effects with causes.<sup>54</sup>

That the New Education in South Australia was to be a distillation, of varying proportions, of disparate foci, is obvious from a reading of the 1907 course of instructions. Central to the new discourse/practice was an exhortation for all teachers to try and see the child's point of view, to cultivate 'sympathy' and to feel as the child feels.<sup>55</sup> The 'purpose-built' personality of the teacher would, by his or her ethical example and moral observation, lead the child to discover her or his 'true character and dispositions'. However, the curricula changes of the new education were gendered and class-based in line with coterminous welfare discourse/practice and the increasing 'embourgeoisment' of the family. The naturalisation of the mind as an object of the scientific-rational gaze was imbricated in the naturalisation of the family, child-rearing and the child. For pedagogical transformations to occur, the proponents of the 'new education' believed that the individual must be truly free. The notion of individualised pedagogy depended entirely on the possibility of the observation and classification of normal development and the idea of spontaneous learning. In this mode, 'scientific' legitimisation of a process of knowledge developed.

Within this context, the work of Maria Montessori, a leading Italian exponent of scientific pedagogy, who popularised the work of Itard and Séguin in France, which had begun with the attempt to train the Wild boy of Aveyron, was given prominence. Dottoressa Montessori's medico-behavioural model was utilised first, in the training of 'idiots' and second, in the education of the impoverished children of Italian city slums - 'the child who has not the force to develop and he (sic) who is not yet developed are in some ways alike'.<sup>56</sup> The emphasis on health, hygiene and the measurement of the mental capacities of children in Montessori's discourse indicates a slippage between the pedagogy of child development and

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54 Constance MacKenzie, Director of Public Kindergartens in Philadelphia, U.S.A., 'Practical Psychology', cited in SAEG, November, 1893, p.140. My emphasis.

55 SAEG, February 20th, 1907. 'Education Regulations', p.43.

56 Maria Montessori, The Montessori Method. London, 1912, pp.44-45.

degeneracy and idiocy. Her classification of 'more and 'less' educable types furthered the argument of a 'need' for specialised technologies according to the stages of development in children's growth. The earlier works of Fröebel and Pestalozzi had also privileged the concept of individual 'growth', a concept that was to find increasing favour with the proponents of Kindergartens and the infant classes of the State school, necessitating a new discourse/practice. Books privileging individualised pedagogies, such as Caldwell Cook's The Play Way (1915) appeared. According to Selleck, 'It argued play was the "natural means of study in youth" and terms other reformers had made familiar were called on parade again: interest, activity, joy, learning - not teaching, self government'.<sup>57</sup>

Play, then, becomes a crucial site for observation and normalisation and is introduced into education discourse as a pedagogic device. Activity, experience and playing were conjoined in intellectual terms - the play-like exploration of objects would enhance the child's spontaneous creation of scientific rationality. All that is required is for the child to be provided with conditions for spontaneous activity. The central pedagogic devices become observation, monitoring and normalising of the sequence and effects of children's development.

As briefly sketched earlier in this chapter, in the works of Wilderspin, Stow and Kay-Shuttleworth, a theory of play is imbricated in health and poverty discourses, and this fuelled the work of such people as Margaret McMillan, an early influential supporter, advocate and developer of the British nursery school system, physical education and drama education. Play was a central motif to all three discourses; it was a 'natural birthright' which would be developed freely in a morally managed environment.<sup>58</sup> Maybanke Anderson, in New South Wales, and her contemporary, Lillian de Lissa, who commenced South Australia's first

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57 Selleck, New Education. p.41.

58 Margaret McMillan, Education through the Imagination. London, George Allen and Unwin, 1904. In B. Simon, The Politics of Education Reform 1920-1940. London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1968.

kindergarten in 1906, echoed McMillan's claim of freedom being inextricably linked to the theme of play. The natural individual was the hope for the future:

As an educational factor, play is of the utmost importance. Play is a self-active representation of the inner representation from inner necessity and impulse. It is the most characteristic manifestation of childhood. It is the centre around which the interests and activities of the young group themselves.... The old education made the textbook and its contents the subject matter, that all-important thing, and endeavoured to pour this information into the child, as though he (sic) were a can to be filled. This system, unfortunately, still prevails.... Schiller says - "The child is not interested in subject matter as a related factor in a total and growing experience. Thus to see it is to psychologise it. Moreover, the subject matter cannot be got into the child from without. Learning is active.... It involves organic assimilation, starting from within...."

It is this ideal that characterises the new education, which takes the child as the centre, and uses his interests and powers as the starting-point. At the age when the child is in the kindergarten, from three years to six years, his whole interest is in play. The kindergarten takes this spontaneous play, which practically constitutes the life of the child, and turns it to educational account.... Fröebel says - "A child that plays thoroughly with self-active determination, perseveringly, until physical fatigue forbids will surely be a thorough, determined man, capable of self-sacrifice for the promotion of the welfare of himself and others". To crush this play-spirit in childhood is to crush the individuality of manhood, since it is through play the child sows the first seeds of individuality and creativity.<sup>59</sup>

While the emphasis on love and nature had been emblems of Stow, Wilderspin, Kay-Shuttleworth, Carpenter and Symonds, the notion of individual freedom is a new departure. The notion of an individualised pedagogy is firmly rooted in the possibility of the observation and classification of 'normal' development and the idea of spontaneous learning. The appeal of two evolutionary theories of children's play heightened within this context. Karl Groos' two works, The Play of Animals (1898) and The Play of Man (1901), posited the notion that children's play has an instinctive basis which prepares the child for adult life. His view of play as socialisation was considered to be of serious import by many Australian educationists to the point that it can be read as the main thesis of twentieth century play:

Every child is to be a citizen, a member of society, and, in order that he (sic) may be the best kind of a member, it is imperative that he should understand the aim of society. Social life, as it is, is too complex for the child to

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<sup>59</sup> SAEG, May 9th, 1906. 'What is Kindergarten?' pp. 125-126. Reproduced from The Australian Christian Commonwealth. Emphasis in original.

understand. The kindergarten aims to reproduce in miniature the activities of society. So the child, through the play, will understand their meaning, and be willing to play his part in relation to them; so he will understand interdependence, which will teach him to respect all work, whether trade or profession, which is done in an honest, painstaking way, for people's good, and into which the worker puts his best effort ... [so] that in reality, his life may be a "self-evolving circle".<sup>60</sup>

Parallel to Groos' theories, G. Stanley Hall proposed, in 1907, a recapitulation theory of play, based on evolutionary biology, which asserted that children needed to play through their primitive atavisms to mature into adult beings. Organised games and playground equipment were posted as important devices in removing such primitive needs of 'disorderly' children. Along with other explicit class and gender-based options of education, which were to produce normative regulations of dress, hygiene, behaviour and time discipline, children's play was reformulated as being in 'need' of organisation. Play 'should' be a collective pursuit which, while bringing happiness, would provide a mode of 'supervised freedom' ensuring that 'primitivism' was excluded and 'character' and 'appropriate' work-habits instilled:

I wish I could review the whole subject (of play) as to show the bearing of the various games and exercises on the muscular and mental actions that boys and girls will be called upon to perform in later life, and how the young human animal in his (sic) life development goes through the various stages of savagery and semi-civilization that the human race has passed through in its journey to its present point of evolution. It is a study you can carry on for yourselves; and you can apply the results of it in guiding, encouraging and restraining the child in what is perhaps the most important part of his whole education.... In this State (S.A.) we are in a happy position of having a real demand made upon the primary schools for pupils that have been trained by play, and especially by play that demands the employment and training of eyes and hands. This demand is made by the technical schools, modern times.... Surely the primary schools will keep this demand in view when planning the curriculum and making out their time-tables.<sup>61</sup>

Being 'trained by play' was to become not solely a part of a new set of pedagogical practices, which claimed to be in perfect accord with human 'nature' and 'needs' within their psychological constitution, but part of a general set of administrative practices, aimed at individuated, morally regulated character, which, along with the size of the school and its

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60 De Lissa, 'What is Kindergarten?' p. 126. Emphasis in original.

61 SAEG, September 11th, 1907. pp. 209-214. 'The School Site, Surroundings and Furniture : PLAY.' By W. Ramsay Smith, D.Sc., M.B., F.R.S.E., etc. (sic)

grounds, the number of desks and associated furniture, the number of teachers and students, the variety of outdoor equipment, the size of the playground and so on, could further locate, assess, document and account for schooled subjectivities.

The free play of the street could be brought into the school's pedagogic space and, within its sphere of pedagogical authority, could be time-tabled, supervised, regulated and normalised. To delimit parental interference and children's resistances to these pedagogic practices it was necessary to inculcate within 'schoolchildren' an internalised sense of self-regulation. The new linguistic and social category of 'schoolchild' served to reorder familial authority structures and strengthen the Education Department's bureaucratic mode of disciplinary powers and pedagogical authority.

Power 'illusions': Now you see it, now you don't.

Accompanying the 'naturalisation of pedagogy, and the invisibility of coercion in learning, was an increasing emphasis on the visibility of school sites and structures. This obvious physical signification of pedagogical authority was of manifest influence, not just on the behaviour of the schoolchild, but on his or her parent. In South Australia many of the early stone schools are, at first glance, indistinguishable from churches. While some writers have interpreted this as a result of the early nonconformist dominance of the Education Department, it can also be read as a result of common beliefs/perceptions as to how public buildings should look. While these 'intrusions' into the landscape were initially the result of the 1875 Education Act, it was not until the early twentieth century, and particularly after the 1915 Education Act, that schools proliferated in the rural as well as urban landscape.<sup>62</sup> Along with an increase in courses of instruction and advice to teachers, the South Australian Education Gazette of the early twentieth century detailed plans of schools

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<sup>62</sup> See Appendix D for Table D3: South Australia, state primary schools, 1876-1907; Table D4: South Australia, teachers employed by the Education Department, 1875-1902; Table D5: : South Australia, comparison of students of specified ages in state and private schools; and, Table D6: South Australia, full-time enrolments in various state and private secondary schools, 1915-1939.

and residences, instructions as to the care of school sites, surroundings and furniture, the nature of fencing (barbed wire not to be used), laying out of garden and vegetable plots, and other architectural and horticultural advice. The concern of the Education Department with the minutiae of the school's physical arrangements further served to heighten the awareness and perception of the individual schoolchild of his or her positioning within a sphere of pedagogical authority.

Whether the school was built of stone or galvanised iron, or, in later years, brick or weatherboard, placing the school in a prominent position was a matter of concern to the Department. The 'sight' of the school building was an important signifier of its power/knowledge relationship. Many rural schools, long ceased operating, took their name from their prominent geographical location. Mallee Corner School (1915 to 1942) in the Murray Mallee, was built at the conjunction of six roads, and at Crossville (1909 to 1946), on the Eyre Peninsula, where a similar configuration occurred, the stone building with its ripple-iron ceiling still stands as a silent testament to the once busy wheat route. The physical setting-apart from the community of these stone and iron buildings, with their corrugated iron skillion and characteristic roof-line, along with their less-prepossessing asbestos and weatherboard counterparts, with their all encompassing fences, adjacent play areas (even when the school was the only structure in sight), and neatly laid out grounds (sometimes devoid even of stubble) produced a sense, 'conscious' or 'unconscious', of all pervading power. Such was the visible effect of this artefact of power and authority, that all children felt vulnerable at some time in their school life. Whether the school was a five minute or a five mile walk or a pony ride, most children experienced a heightened sense of anticipation in 'going' to school. Some children, like Horrie Simpson, fervently wished to be elsewhere:

**I hated school.... I was only 100 yards from school (at Oodnadatta). I remember the first time I got the stick I ran**

yelling home to mum. I hated being closed in all the time. I wanted to be out down the creek swimming and bird nesting.<sup>63</sup>

Others expressed a love of school, or more particularly its routines. The rhythms of the school day individuated in all 'schoolchildren' the temporal function of other institutions - the factory, the prison, the reformatory and the asylum. While the purposes and populations of these institutions are manifestly different, they share a similarity of institutional routines, which ground out the same rituals of mortification and depersonalisation, and analogous functions of incarceration, deterrence and rehabilitation.<sup>64</sup> As well as individuated norms of regular and punctual school attendance the 'good' schoolchild (as opposed to the 'good' student) was visible by his or her receptive behaviour, overtly signified by his or her dress, cleanliness and neatness. Whether male or female, country or city, many children attending state schools, and many in Catholic and Lutheran schools (although their morning ritual involved the saying of prayers) experienced similar routines. Many adults remembered, like Paddy Baker that 'We'd line up and show our nails. They were inspected every morning and every dinner time when we line up again. We had a drummer. One of the older boys would drum and we would march'.<sup>65</sup> Kathleen McLean could still picture the start to her day, 'we used to march into school, there was a pipe and drum band'<sup>66</sup> a ritual that changed little, regardless of the geography, although in Oodnadatta, they couldn't quite muster a pipe and drum band. 'They'd blow the whistle and you'd line up. Then they would raise the flag and we'd give thanks to the King ... and then show of hands. I

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63 QHI., Horrie Simpson.

64 See Erving Goffman. Asylums. N.Y. Penguin. 1961, for a description of the 'total institution', one example of which is the school.

65 QHI., Paddy Baker, Wolseley Public School, in the south-east of South Australia.

66 QHI., Kathleen McLean, Goodwood Public School.



remember once I got a rap over the knuckles for dirty nails'.<sup>67</sup> Anne Tonkin, at Heathfield School, in the Adelaide Hills, in 1919, remembers:

**Before we came in we'd have drill, form lines and have our nails and shoes inspected. Nobody would go to school without their shoes clean or you'd get into trouble and have to stay in at recess time and write lines for that - "I must clean my shoes" - a hundred times. If your finger nails were dirty you got growled at. Then we'd march up and down. Lunch time, we'd come out at 12 o'clock and the sun would be overhead and we'd have to measure the shadow of the pole.**<sup>68</sup>

While variations occurred in the 1920s and 1930s to these rituals, the intent of habituated practice remained. Adelene Venables recalls her daily ritual began when **'We'd line up and show your hands, sing Song of Australia, put the flag up every day and march into your classrooms and stand silently behind your seats'**<sup>69</sup> While Ann Barber reflected that, in the early 1930s, **'The bell would go and you'd all fall in. You knew where you had to be. I think we had to march while someone played the triangle'**.<sup>70</sup> One not only 'knew where you had to be' but what one had to do. By the close of the 1930s, in South Australian schools, both 'public' and private', power and coercion were to become increasingly invisible:

The ceremony of saluting the National flag may be performed every morning, and the National Salute should be practised at least once a week by the assembled pupils....

The National Salute consists of the simultaneous repetition by the pupils of the following sentences accompanied by actions as detailed below; a slight but distinct pause should be made after each sentence and action:

Optional addition: 'I am an Australian' to be said while standing to 'Attention'.

1. I love my country, the British Empire.
2. I honour her King : King George the Sixth.

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67 QHI., Horrie Simpson, Oodnadatta Public School.

68 QHI., Anne Tonkin, Heathfield School, Mount Lofty Ranges.

69 QHI., Adelene Venables, Mount Gambier Public School.

70 QHI., Ann Barber, Stirling East School, Adelaide Hills.

3. I salute her flag : The Union Jack.
4. I promise cheerfully to obey her laws....

The only command will be 'National Salute'

1. The pupils will place the right hand over the left breast - palm open but with fingers and thumbs close together - and say: 'I love my country, the British Empire', then return to 'Attention'.
2. The pupils will place the right hand to the position for taking an oath, i.e., the right arm should be bent at the elbow, elbow close to the body, hand open palm facing the front, fingers and thumbs close together and say: 'I honour her King, King George the Sixth', then return to attention.<sup>71</sup>

Compulsory education, with its 'naturalised' pedagogy, had as its cornerstone, not the ideology of love or freedom but habituation, whose signifying practices constructed schooled subjectivities. The 'New Education' signalled the appearance of a Stowian type system of teacher training which included the notion that the teachers' methods were no longer to remain visible to the pupil. Such pedagogical practices sought, along class and gender lines, initially, via the mechanism of compulsion, to gain access to individual consciousness, and then to regularise and normalise the habits and principles of the social and cultural practices of individuals, via the practices of pedagogic instruction.

The lining-up ritual, the enforcement of attendance, the imposition of 'cleanliness', the demand for respect/obedience, for and to authority structures, (bureaucratic, patriarchal power/knowledge) and the reformulation of 'useful', 'real' knowledge, were conducive to affecting individual conscience. Rewards for attainment of the desired result underpinned the régimes and norms of this new moral technology. Hegemony was to be achieved covertly by just such a reordering of individual subjectivity, where the silencing of the students, despite the exhortation to show their 'true', 'free' selves, could be read as internalised consent, a consent that would encompass their lives beyond the schoolgrounds.

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71 SAEG, 15th May, 1939. p.233.

### Resistance and Redefinition.

That the educational sphere was not always a place of love, joy and 'natural' play-like learning, but often a site of contestation and resistance, is a matter of record. Teachers as well as children, were subjected to 're-formulation', although this is frequently elided from written discourse. Very few historical accounts exist where teacher resistance to the new educative norms is signified within their overt practices. If students were to speak with one voice, the expectations placed on teachers, by the emergent centralised bureaucracy, was that they also would present as unified, unitary subjects. What was it like to be, for example, a young female teacher operating within a patriarchal mode of governance? Resistance and contestation is usually focused, in the historical narrative, on the child resisting the teacher's control and not that of an individual teacher's struggles. One can only guess at the teacher's sense of herself in the following narrative of Kathleen McLean:

**There was a teacher - Miss Finch - when I look back, she was sadistic. I got the cane every day. (I'd) talk or didn't sit still or something like that. Anyway, this particular day we'd done composition and we were held back for bad writing. She sent all the others into another room to rewrite it and she had my book in her hand like this (gestures - holding her hand aloft) and as she spoke she had a cane. The cane came down across here (gestures to her arm)... I wouldn't cry to please her. I always told mum when I got the cane and she would say 'Well, you must have done something to deserve it.'**

**Looking back through the years, I can see she (Miss Finch) intended that there were no witnesses. I was going to bed and mum said 'What's that dirt on your arm?' I had a look - I was black from there to there - bruised. Mum said, 'I am not standing for that' so she marched to the school the next morning, but it didn't do me any good.**

**When we (children) marched into school, sat down, she said 'Greenham, get out the front.' And she said, 'This is our little baby - runs home and tells mummy.' So she made me stand out the front of the class until recess time. And every now and again she would say 'We will let the little baby answer this one'.<sup>72</sup>**

The expectations placed on women teachers, in matters of the physical control of the bodies placed in their charges, were a constant source of contestation. In particular, older

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72 O.H.I., Kathleen McLean, née Greenham.

boys were not always so easy for female teachers to control, regarding matters of detention or corporal punishment. In one or two teacher rural schools, this frequently presented a problem. Horrie Simpson remembers that:

**There was one lad they couldn't do anything with. The teacher couldn't handle him. She used to lock him in the room when she went off for lunch. She couldn't handle him, she was only a little teacher, a small woman, and he was an uncontrollable kid, so she used to lock him in.<sup>73</sup>**

For women teachers in religious orders, disciplining older male students could be hazardous. The wearing of habits was not always a protective device. At the Catholic School in Clare, run by the Sisters of Saint Joseph, Veronica Sladdin remembers frequent classroom disruptions in 1911:

**I can remember two boys in particular who were grown-up, practically, when I was very small at school, (they) used to do some stupid things. They used to take the furniture out of school. We had long desks. They used to do all sorts of stupid things like that. Just take them out in the dinner hour or something like that. I remember one used to get into a lot of trouble... I remember him playing up one day and she (the Sister) had him by the hand. This particular Sister, she didn't hit you on the hand or leg, she would get him wherever she could get him. And then she had him by the hair and he was sitting under the desk and pulling her everywhere. And he bit her.<sup>74</sup>**

One can only guess at the probable constant tension caused by women's presence in education per se, and what effects this had on patriarchal and bureaucratic education systems in return. Women teachers in both private and public systems were frequently placed in invidious positions over matters of their dichotomously perceived 'femininity'. Some female teachers in isolated one-teacher 'bush' schools were quickly made aware that they were expected to operate within a variety of community sanctions. The most common of these was that the community would not support the physical punishment of their older 'lads'. The 'feminisation' of teaching in South Australia meant that many small rural schools had a

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73 QHI., Horrie Simpson.

74 QHI., Veronica Sladdin.

succession of female appointments. Women teachers would often accept appointments spurned by male 'colleagues'. In 1914 Alice Springs' first school was opened solely because a South Australian woman teacher, Mrs Ida Stanley, separated from her husband, accepted the post at half the salary of a male teacher.<sup>75</sup> In South Australia, eighty percent of all primary schools were one-teacher schools, reaching a peak in 1930 of seven hundred one-teacher schools.<sup>76</sup> Many schools, like Telowie Creek, near Port Germein on Spencer Gulf, (which was established in 1909) were staffed by women from their opening, in the first decade of this century until male teachers 'arrived' in the late 1930s. In many areas board was scarce and many women teachers frequently experienced a sense of social and economic deprivation. That these difficulties were rarely granted official credence is a reflection of the moral regulatory demands placed upon female teachers, their economic vulnerability and their gendered location within a patriarchal education department grid.

In the depression years, with a drop in salary, young women teachers, like their earlier counterparts, continued to apply to rural areas to ensure the obtaining of a job. Many schools opened in the 1920s in response to land settlement 'packages' under Selection Acts. In South Australia, a community required just six children to keep a school open and it was not infrequent that a farmer would donate a corner of a two hundred-acre mallee paddock to the Education Department in return for a school and teacher. The Cortlinye East school, on the western edges of Eyre Peninsula, opened in 1929 under just such an arrangement. In 1931, Kathleen Fitzgerald (née Brown) travelled to her first appointment which she evocatively recalls:

It was quite something to go on the old Moonta (a ship) to Port Lincoln.... We travelled at night and got into Lincoln in the morning. I remember my mother saying to me 'When you get there send a telegram. If you put "good trip",

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<sup>75</sup> South Australia was responsible for the staffing of schools in the Northern Territory and it was not until 1938 that a male teacher came to Alice Springs.

<sup>76</sup> In South Australia in 1921 female teachers numbered seventy-two percent of the service. By 1937 this figure fell to fifty-five per cent, although the exigencies of World War Two saw a rapid short-term growth.

then you haven't been seasick'. I had never sent a telegram before so it was a day of firsts....

Then we caught the train, a very slow train that goes up the coast to Ceduna; but I only went as far as Cummins.... I changed to a little rail car. It was something like a bus on rails, and it towed a box-like van which carried the luggage and mail. It was very hot, 109 degrees or more that day. We travelled up as far as Caralue, a very sandy district. The lines spread, and the van ran off the tracks. We had to climb up the cutting and sit there while the men helped the driver push the van back on the rails. So it was 9.00 at night when I got to Kimba ... the chairman of the school committee from Cortlinye East met me.

At about half past ten we set off to drive ten miles due north. The road was only grubbed in the mallee scrub for the width of the vehicle so that in the night light there was just this narrow ribbon of road and the black scrub on either side. We just went on ... ten (miles)... to the farm house where I was to board.<sup>77</sup>

Not only children experienced a heightened sense of anticipation regarding the first sighting of school - teachers did, too:

...We walked along a winding track through the scrub and came into a clearing which had the school in the middle of it. Thick waggon tracks led to the school where Mr. Hardy, a farmer, had carted water into the tank. There was no rain water; it was a dry year. There was no garden, and no shelter shed, just a little porch so if it was wet the children had to stand in the porch or sit in school.

It was weatherboard, standing alone. Three windows on the south and one on the north. The rule is the child being right-handed sits with the light coming in over the left shoulder so they faced west. There were nine desks, two to a desk, it accommodated eighteen children. The equipment was ... the desks, a table with a drawer, a chair, and a stock box. The stock box was about three feet by two of solid inch-thick wood with a firm lid and latch that could be locked. Everything for the school was in the box.

After I'd been there some time I got the parents to make another cupboard out of kerosene boxes. That had two doors on it, and I could keep things away from the dust.... There was no play equipment, no swing, no ball.<sup>78</sup>

Within the classroom walls, both teachers and children came to know themselves, to re-formulate themselves. The school day, for state school children and their teachers, was increasingly 'legitimated' in the first part of the twentieth century by school and

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77 Kathleen Fitzgerald, née Browne, cited in Hank Nelson, With Its Hat Around Its Ears. Recollections of the Bush School. ABC Enterprises, 1989, pp.41-42.

78 Ibid., p. 70.

departmental rules emanating from the central administrative grid. Pupils were objectified as 'data' and sorted and classified within the concept of 'ability', with its accompanying normative rationality. Attempts to resist the individuating and subjectification of school knowledge, the official state knowledge, were difficult to mount. Children were placed at desks in the classroom according to their 'ability', that is, according to their Friday test results. Coralie Green recalls:

**Every Friday - the first two lessons would be our Friday tests.... Then we used to go into the boys yard - the whole school - and we'd have all this marching around to music... but I have a feeling that perhaps the teachers might have been marking the tests. We would all be marching along and whichever class was the best, they used to win and the prize was a photo of the King hanging up in their room....**

**Then you'd go back after that and the teacher would have marked all the tests and she'd give out the marks. We arranged the seating from the Friday tests - it used to be out of fifty and whoever got fifty would be in the best seat - the top back left hand corner, facing the teacher. I think there was about eight along the back row ... and then you'd come down according to the marks, so the worst marks were down the front.<sup>79</sup>**

She remembers that, if you 'wanted to sit next to a best friend ... you'd do a bit of cheating. You wouldn't cheat but you'd compare ... or you'd have the answers on a piece of paper and you'd pass them over to your friend'. Arithmetic and spelling were the best chances of 'getting away with it' as long as you were both 'pretty good'.<sup>80</sup>

Children were not only instructed in the good 'normalised' habits of 'cleanliness', 'neatness' and obedience' but in 'correct' speech forms. The schoolroom became, in effect, a laboratory where development could be watched, monitored and set along the right path. Freed from coercion, the child was more 'subtly' regulated into normality:

**This lady teacher she sent all us boys out to pick up the stones in the schoolyard. (Oodnadatta) I remember coming in once and**

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79 OHI., Coralie Green.

80 Ibid.

saying, 'Bin finish now'. We used to talk pigeon English and she said to me, 'Don't talk to me as if I am a gin'. And she got the cane and gave me three or four whacks on the hand....

And when the Inspector came, the headmaster would say, 'All you children have to come to school nice and clean because the inspector will be here on Monday'. And he said to these three or four little Afghans, 'You girls have a good hot bath and change your drawers'.<sup>81</sup>

Increasingly, in the first part of the twentieth century, 'the child', as an emergent discursive subject position, was produced within pathologisations of difference and deviance from the 'norm' - that is, the 'educated standard' was established. Thus, the possibilities of mass testing and normalisation of the population were 'ensured'. The child, that is, 'the schoolchild', was (and is) created as a sign which is decoded and recoded within the prevailing classroom pedagogical discourses. The 'individual' is to be 'individuated', that is located, read, defined and mapped within other signifiers of similar or different relators, such as play, activity, experience and work. Through the regulation of the 'new' education pedagogies, and their psychologisation, children became subjected in classrooms. 'Moral' demands for schooling subsumed economic demands. Regular attendance could not be disrupted by the inadequate clothing of the schoolchild, by not having shoes in winter, by pauperism or death in the family, or the exigencies of a world-wide Depression. Truancy, therefore, the ultimate mode of resistance, was read as a 'deviant' and 'irrational' rejection of the pleasures of schooling; a problem to be treated and cured within psychological paradigms, as the following 'official' response to this letter shows:

Mr Adey,

Dear Sir

I am sorry to inform you about my Girl not attending school we have done all in our power she has been thrashed and that is no good so we coaxed her and that is the same she wont attend so you can see what trouble we have we have been fined and cant pay it as well my family is out of work we have only a few rations to live on not enough for a week and i have a girl age twenty four years lying in bed waiting for her end to come witch might not be long and Violet causing all this trouble would you kindly let her off from school as she has only got to go till the thirtieth of August and she will be fourteen years i don't like to tell you all my trouble but

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81 OHL., Horrie Simpson.



i am just hoping you will take a kindly view of my trouble half the time she hasn't got boots.<sup>82</sup>

Violet was sent to the Fullarton Girl's Probationary School until her fourteenth birthday. She was prosecuted under Section 48 of the Education Act in April 1930.<sup>83</sup>

'Good' behaviour, normalised behaviour, was to be its own reward. The child who walked six miles to the Mannum school and back received a special laudatory message in the Education Gazette of September 1934, a subtle reminder to teachers that the 'training for life' must be vigorously pursued in times of Depression. Teachers were instructed that warnings against the evils of gambling must be forcefully delivered in moral training lessons and, at all times, the importance of 'street conduct' was to be impressed upon schoolchildren. Offering seats to elderly ladies and gentlemen in tram cars, desisting from chalk-marking the streets, supporting the Penny Savings Bank, subscribing to Minda and the Children's Hospital, not placing orange and banana skins on the pavement, nor date stones, not breaking street lamps, nor flying kites near high tension wires, or 'donkeying' on bicycles gained increasing instructional space in the Education Gazette. Children's habits out of school could best be monitored if they carried their own 'policeman' in their head.

Conformity to these norms had been assisted by the appointment of Constance M. Davey, in 1924, as the South Australian Education Department's first psychologist. Her appointment had been strongly advocated by Dr. Gertrude Halley, the Department's Principal Medical Officer, who had been appointed in 1913. Although, amongst Dr. Halley's duties was the mental testing of children, it was the appointment of Dr. Davey which overtly and formally established the link between schooling and psychology. 'Opportunity' classes for the 'dull' and 'backward' children were established by the Education Department in 1925

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82 Cited in P.J. Cashen, *Without sufficient excuse: a study of truancy in South Australian Schools 1927-1939*. M.Ed. Thesis, University of Adelaide, 1980, p.1.

83 *Ibid.*, p.10.

and in 1927 I.Q. tests were introduced for all entrants into high school.<sup>84</sup> The 1920s bore witness to increasing practice of the technique of distributing individuals, in the supervisable space of the classroom, within a paradigm of age-grading. All activities, passing through a grid of normalising observation, began to reflect a medico-bureaucratic 'perception' of age, with its attendant notions of a sequentially developed intellect. Just as attention had been focused, in the 1915 Act, to excluding the very young from the primary school, the older student was now placed under the microscope:

Special Note - In future no child in the metropolitan area, who, on the 1st day of January was 13 years of age, or more, and who has passed the Qualifying Certificate, is to be enrolled at a Primary School.<sup>85</sup>

School children between the ages of thirteen and fourteen were to attend a high school, providing they were within a three mile radius. Just as the truant must be 'treated' and 'cured', the over-aged and/or the 'subnormal' schoolchild must be placed on a new psychological grid where 'disciplining' becomes knowing, where the products of oppression, the powerless, become invisible within 'naturalised' discourse. The 'unnatural', 'abnormal', or 'pathological' individual is to be corrected because he or she is a threat to the psychic health of the social body. By 1939 the possibilities existed for the advocacy of a Medical and Psychological Clinic which would take a major role in 're-educating' children with 'an abnormal adjustment to society', whereby refusing the pleasures of schooling was read as evidence of serious psychiatric disturbance.<sup>86</sup>

'Vocational guidance' was fused onto the emergent psychological grid as an indicator of the relationship of future employment and 'intelligence' and became influential in South Australia by the nineteen thirties.<sup>87</sup> The effects of the Depression, however, curtailed the

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84 See Thiele, Grains of Mustard Seeds.

85 SAEG, September 15th., 1925. p. 266.

86 Miller, Long Division, p.170.

87 Ibid.

movement's application in the short term. While the Department continued to produce, through its schools, separate Merit Lists for boys and girls, outlining their 'fitness' for employment, and regulating a system of rewards (a job) for 'good' students, this 'scientific' mode of employment selection was not taken up in a rapidly shrinking job-market. The system of vocational guidance did, however, allow for the formation of a meritocratic educational 'system' where failure to attain employment was read as individual, not systemic, failure.<sup>88</sup> School 'results' and future employment, despite the contradictions of the Depression, came to be read as synonymous and was mediated through gendered structures of individual 'character'.

### In Summary

The 'normalisation' of state education, which took place in the first decades of the twentieth century, not only reshaped children's sense of time and space and knowledge but reformulated their sense of self. The individuation of moral habits, that is, moral character, re-defined the young in new social categories - 'the schoolchild', truant', 'the adolescent' and so forth, and, in time, the individual was recreated by his or her signifier to be read and callibrated within the pedagogic discourses regulating the classroom.

The New Education pedagogy which offered so much, at the turn of the century, with its naturalist and practical emphasis, achieved very little of what was promised. Teachers, particularly female teachers constrained by patriarchal authority, were hampered by the constraints of time-tabling, courses of instruction and the normalised codes of moral behaviour, both for their students and themselves and were involved in a covert (indeed, for some emergent 'professionals', an overt) support of the prevailing social order. The all-encompassing gaze of the teacher whom, by love, empathy and example, would encourage the children to reveal, through 'natural' play and activity, their 'true selves', was focused upon a natural education. But 'true selves' was to be read quite differently: for boys from

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<sup>88</sup> South Australian Parliamentary Papers. (SAPP) 1929, no.44, p.4.

'working class' backgrounds this meant a technical, agricultural and/or industrial-based mode of schooling, with an emphasis on practical skills, and for girls of similar background it meant an increasing involvement in domestic training. The true selves of children were to be reconstructed through an explicit socialisation in appropriate age and gender roles - a reflection of prevailing national and social ideologies regarding efficiency and stability of the 'masculine' 'body politic'.

The creation in 'school children' of new habits, attitudes, beliefs, desires and perceptions was calculated to 'carry-over' from school days in such a way that individual conscience and consciousness was understood and lived according to these new norms. Even those adults I interviewed who attended school at the turn of this century, when an alternative to full compulsory education existed, and the nexus between school and work was loosely marked, recalled their school days within frameworks of schooled subjectivities more complementary to the educational changes which occurred after the 1915 Act and the new social categories this ushered in.<sup>89</sup> This is not to imply a lack of resistance to these juridico-bureaucratic changes, rather that memory (and rememoration) tends to fuse events that happen diachronically together in the narrative on a synchronic plane. Hence, the all pervading power of the school is relived, even by those who left at the age of ten or eleven, as though there was no alternative to schooling in the world they inhabited.

The policing of social space, which became increasingly invisible, was eventually to be read by the population as a given. Schooling was to be a 'neutral' sphere within which all children, including those of the respectable classes, would adopt 'good' habits. It is fascinating that despite the effects of World War One and a world Depression, which one would have deemed a massive catalyst for social and economic reform, attempts to analyse and reform the patriarchal and socio-politico economic interests of the 'ruling class' did not increase. Rather, there were joint intensified efforts, by educators and 'childhood'

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<sup>89</sup> The reconstruction of 'identity' was discussed in Chapter one, and follows below, in Chapter seven, of the thesis.

professionals, to 'secure' the 'pure' pedagogical space of institutions, such as the school, as a space in which normalised subjects could be created. Social cohesion was to be best served by imbricating pedagogical practice which installed hegemony into schooled subjectivities. Self-worth came to be measured, and individuated, against new 'educative' norms where deviance from such norms was read as individual failure, a failure to internalise and inculcate in one's self the desired forms of the 'governmental' training of sensibilities.

Bringing the life of the child into the formative space of the school was achieved with the 1915 Education Act, a culmination of work begun forty years earlier. Within this space the child would absorb the techniques of moral supervision in an atmosphere of 'supervised freedom' which would reveal his or her 'true character and disposition'. The functions of habit and sensibility formation then could be redeployed into the socio and psycho-therapeutic register and embodied in the disciplined individual of the school system.

Following Foucault, the school space, and its pedagogic sphere of power/knowledge, for the first time made a particular organisation of life normative for a whole population, and did so through the manner in which they formed a corrective knowledge of each individual member. The emergence of the 'school-child' both as an object of scientific enquiry and as the target of a number of normalising practices, in particular children's play practices, is part of the production of the individual as the 'normal' subject-form. But the success of normalising power also depends on the compliance of those subjects targeted by the technologies of normalisation, their willingness to march to the beat of a uniform drum:

in itself the exercise of power is not violence; nor is it a consent which implicitly is not renewable. It is a total structure of actions brought to bear upon possible actions; it incites, it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult; in the extreme it constrains or forbids absolutely; it is nevertheless always a way of acting upon an acting subject or acting subjects.<sup>90</sup>

If power can be read as working through subjects' actions, rather than directly on the individual, it takes place in practices that are discursive and material and that already

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90 Foucault, Discipline and Punish. p.789.

delimit and condition action. Thus, one can speak of multiple schooled subjectivities wherein multiple positionings of the 'schoolchild' refers to the specificities of the different practices in order to describe the different subject positions and the different power relations played out in them.

Perhaps, then, one can read the South Australian introduction of compulsory schooling as the site of an inextricable linking of power/knowledge relations with multiple subject-positions. That these multiple subject positions are often contradictory is best observed in the discursive practices of children's play. For schools not only colonised children's speech, age, gender, habits and desires but their play situation as well.

Coralie Green spoke of '**playing school**' as her main form of play at home, with '**the chalk and the black board**' amongst her favourite play objects, in the back room of her house which she turned into a schoolroom. '**I always played school.**'<sup>91</sup> She was not alone in this activity. The feminisation of the teaching force provided girls with role models to imitate. Within such play activities, the 'all powerful mother' play practices were supplemented with the 'all powerful female teacher' activities, contexts within which women were accorded apparent 'legitimate' power. 'Schooling', then, was to take place without schools, just as it did within.

The power paradigms of children's play practices were to gain increasing superintendence. Normalising power was focused on other sites besides the schoolroom: the neatness of the copybook was transformed to the neatness of the school garden and the school playground became an artefact for the principal scene of the real life of children.<sup>92</sup> The tracing of the emergence of school playgrounds in South Australia and their place in educational reform, is focused on in the next chapter.

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91 QHI., Coralie Green.

92 David Stow. The Training System. p.142.

**CHAPTER SIX**  
**'THE UNCOVERED SCHOOLROOM' - 'THE PRINCIPLE SCENE OF THE REAL LIFE**  
**OF CHILDREN'**

Flowers in a playground would tend to counteract any disagreeable smell that may proceed from the children, and thereby be conducive to their health as well as to that of those who have charge of them.<sup>1</sup>

The first sproutings of the human mind need thoughtful culture; there is no period of life, indeed, in which culture is so essential. And yet, in nine out of ten cases, it is precisely while the little blades of thought and buds of love are frail and tender, that no heed is taken to maintain the soil about them wholesome, and the air about them free from blight.<sup>2</sup>

The 'culture of childhood', surrounded by horticultural metaphor, was to be superintended and re-formed on a specially designed space - the playground - a sphere of normalising observation which would permit the realisation of new social norms through self-expressive techniques. The child, following Fröebel, was like a flower and the educator's task was to provide the appropriate climate, soil and conditions in which the flower would flourish. There would be suitable places for play and rest, suitable equipment, and gentle direction for the child to grow like a flower in the garden. Fröebel was not the originator of the plant-garden metaphor, however, as such a notion can be found in the works of Plato, St. Anselm, Elyot, Comenius and Rousseau.

In tracing the genealogy of school playgrounds it is surprising to discover that the discourse of playgrounds does not emanate directly from the works of such child reformers as Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Fröebel or Robert Owen. As an historical artefact, the discourse of playgrounds is, of course, linked to the child-centred pedagogy of these reformers, but their direct focus was on play and on playing outdoors in the garden rather than the construction of a purpose-built space. Well before Britain's first kindergarten was opened, in Tavistock Place in London in 1864, discourses on the pedagogic device of the purpose-built playground as a sphere of moral control were articulated. Samuel Wilderspin's, On the Importance of Educating the Infant children of the poor, published in

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel Wilderspin, Infant Education. London, Simpkin and Marshall, 1825, (third edition), p.204. Cited in Carolyn Steedman, Cathy Urwin and Valerie Walkerdine (eds). Language, Gender and Childhood. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985, p.76.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Dickens (ed). Household Words. No.278, 21 July 1855, vol. xi, p.579. Cited in Lyndsay Gardiner, The Free Kindergarten Union of Victoria 1908-80. Melbourne, ACER, 1982, p.2.

1823, and Infant Education, published in 1825, had specifically drawn the readers' and educators' attention to the central pedagogic role of the playground; David Stow's The Training System, The Moral Training School, and the Normal Seminary, first published in 1836, and his Supplement to Moral Training and the Training System, published in 1839, privileged playgrounds as 'the principal scene of the real life of children' and 'the arena on which their true character and dispositions were exhibited'; and Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth's pioneering Moral and Physical Condition, published in 1838, combined with his Four Periods of Public Education, published in 1862, and Memorandum on Popular Education, published in 1868, all reinforced a pedagogy of the playground as a site of moral superintendence.<sup>3</sup>

The school playground, in its Australian setting, has received scant attention in works on the history of childhood or in general historiographies of Australian education, although there are some notable exceptions.<sup>4</sup> Children's folklore has fared better, although the detailing of play activities has remained a separate genre from that of 'historians of education'.<sup>5</sup> Yet, children's play, children's school playgrounds, and their attendant apparatus, constitute a particular - if privileged - historical location of the relationship between the idea of children's culture, as postulated by contemporary theorists and 'child savers', and the emergent machinery of government.

This chapter seeks to demonstrate that the school playground, and its environment, in the same register as that of the public playground, which I have discussed in Chapter 3, was to become the target of new disciplinary techniques and organisational forms, which

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<sup>3</sup> For an overview of Samuel Wilderspin's contributions see W.P. McCann, 'Samuel Wilderspin and the early infant schools', in British Journal of Educational Studies, vol. 14, 1966, pp.188-204; for a detailed discussion of his life and works see Philip McCann and Francis Young, Samuel Wilderspin and the Infant School Movement, London, Croom Helm, 1982. The works of Stow and Kay-Shuttleworth are discussed, in more detail, below.

<sup>4</sup> See Bronwyn Davies, Life in the Classroom and the Playground : The Accounts of Primary School Children. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982 for a late twentieth century account.

<sup>5</sup> See June Factor, Captain Cook Chased a Chook : Children's Folklore in Australia. Melbourne, Penguin, 1988; and other selections to which I referred in footnote 1 in the Introduction to this thesis.



brought this purpose-built space within the sphere of moral training and the discourses of 'supervised freedom'. Prevailing influences on early twentieth century South Australian educators were the discourses of the New Education, with their demands for a self-regulating, 'natural' individual, which in turn had drawn their inspiration from not just the 'natural' child-centred pedagogies of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Fröebel and Owen but from the socio-technical practices of such 'reformers' as Wilderspin, Stow, Kay-Shuttleworth, Symons and Carpenter. Within emergent Child Study societies a 'need' for a playground was articulated, not just on 'moral training' grounds but as a demonstrable sphere where ontogeny could be linked to phylogeny - the individual's development to that of the species.

The most effective way to ensure that a child, like a flower, grew 'correctly' was to superintend his or her environment so that it could be transformed. Freed from coercion, the child could more easily become normalised. Docile bodies would become a self-disciplined work force. 'Supervised freedom' was to develop in the uncovered schoolroom site in this specially tended 'greenhouse', where the all-seeing gaze of the teacher would ensure children's physical and psychic health.

Within such myths, the school playground was simultaneously a site of social regulation and a site of social redefinition. As reconstructed memory reveals, myth is individuated in myriad, contested forms and registers. The dream, the normative vision, is not actualised deed.

#### A Genealogy.

David Stow's The Training System, the Moral Training School, and the Normal Seminary, was first published in Scotland in 1836, and was, in fact, a manual for the re-design and re-organisation of British popular schools, which have their genesis in the emergence of mass education in Continental Europe of the eighteenth century. In common with the educational policies of the absolutist states of eighteenth century Europe, a religious ethos underpinned interest in popular education, which, as I have outlined in Chapter Five of this thesis, laid the foundations for the securing of the moral and physical well-being of whole populations. Stow's text recorded his experiments at the Glasgow Normal Seminary in the 1820s wherein he wished to make supervised play central to the

new organisation of the popular school and he urged teachers to 'become children' because 'Without such condescension, a perfect knowledge of real character and dispositions cannot be obtained'.<sup>6</sup>

Before turning to the South Australian setting, I want to cite Stow at some length because a superimposition of two quite different concerns is emerging in Stow's 'pastoral' programme which I postulate as critical to any reading of the South Australian context. The first is that of the religio-philanthropic concern with the moral well-being of individuals, and the second is that of the governmental proto-social scientific concern with the 'moral and physical' condition of the population. Stow remarked:

The true character and dispositions are best developed at play with companions similar in years and pursuits. A playground, however, may either be a moral training ground, or a mischief-ground. It is the latter too generally when the children are left alone, without any authoritative superintending eye upon them.... A playground is in fact the principal scene of the real life of children ...-the arena on which their true character and dispositions are exhibited, and where, free and unconstrained, they can hop and jump about, swing or play at tig, ball or marbles. In the initiatory school, in particular, the girls and boys of taste may be seen examining the open flowers planted round the borders, but without presuming to disturb their delicate and downy petals, a few mathematic little men may also be observed arranging the squares and circles which they may have formed in the sandy gravel; and a few of 'cast peculiar' may be seen on the school door steps, sitting in abstract reverie....

Amidst this busy scene, the trainer must be present, not to check, but to encourage youthful gaiety. All is free as air, and subject only to a moral observation of any particular delinquency, the review of which is reserved for the school gallery.... A monitor or janitor won't do as a substitute for the sovereign authority of the master, which all acknowledge and whose condescension, in talking in a game or swing with them is felt as a kindness and a privilege, and who, in consequence, is enabled to guide them by a moral, rather than a physical influence. Whilst the pupils sympathise with each other, it is important that children sympathise with their master. For this purpose, it is necessary that he place himself on such terms with his pupils as they can, without fear, make him their confidant, unburden their minds, and tell him any little story, or mischievous occurrence. Teachers and parents, desirous of gaining the confidence of their children must in fact, themselves as it were, become children, by bending to, and occasionally engaging in, their plays and amusements. Without such condescensions, a perfect knowledge of real character and dispositions cannot be obtained.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> David Stow, The Training System. p.156.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.142-149, p.156.

At the centre of Stow's concern was the transformation of the organised space of the school, such that it could incorporate the free space of the streets where, through play, the children revealed their 'true selves'. At the beginning of his text, Stow wrote -

In Education, as hitherto conducted in school, we may have had sound instruction, but not physical, intellectual, and moral training. Schools are not so constructed as to enable the child to be superintended in real life at play; the master has not the opportunity of training, except under the unnatural restraint of a covered school-room; and it is imagined that, or at least stated, that children are morally trained, without their being placed in circumstances where their moral dispositions and habits may be developed and cultivated; as if it were possible to train a bird to fly in a cage, or a race-horse to run in a stable.<sup>8</sup>

The imperatives of freedom and surveillance are thus neatly balanced. Stow wrote that he:

Gradually discovered that one day's teaching in school was not equal in effect to six days training on the streets ... I found I had been ignorant of the important fact, that teaching is not training, and that sympathy and example of companionship are more influential than the example and precepts of any master.<sup>9</sup>

Stow's ameliorative contribution was the playground or, as he insisted on calling it, the 'uncovered schoolroom'. A site within which he sought to blend the schoolmaster's 'moral observation' with the free play in which the child revealed its 'true character and dispositions'; the playground, then, served as the emblem for the new non-coercive system. For Wilderspin and Stow it is the playground which mediates most visibly between the norms of the classroom and the ungoverned life of the streets: enclosing the latter within a simulcrum of itself, but one organised in such a manner that the environment itself subjects each child's activities to constant moral superintendence.

Within this schema, the child is to internalise norms without coercion simply by playing within a 'morally landscaped' domain of experience. In his text, Stow advises:

Let everything be kept neat and clean, and such important habits will not be lost in after life; the moral taste may be formed, which delights in having the front of every cottage door neat and clean, and its sides decked out with the rose, the clematis, and the woodbine; and similar habits carried out into the crowded lanes of a city, would add greatly to the health, comfort and happiness of the community. The flowers in the playground generate pleasing associations, afford many useful lessons, and assist the trainer occasionally in elucidating Scripture emblems. Flowers or fruit constantly

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8     Ibid, pp 5-6.

9     Ibid., p.127.

in sight, and within reach, exercise the virtues of honesty and self-denial. The principle, 'Thou God seest me', coupled with practical forbearance, account for the interesting fact, that in several of the juvenile and initiatory play-grounds, in the poorest districts of Glasgow, and other large towns, children have freely enjoyed themselves from day to day, and yet currants and strawberries have been permitted to ripen, although they have been within the reach of every child.<sup>10</sup>

The imbrication of individualising moral supervision and the governmental regulation of the population is focused more explicitly within the 'new pedagogy', with its attendant apparatus of social investigation and administration. In his testimony to the 1838 sitting of the parliamentary Select Committee on the Education of the Poorer Classes, James Kay-Shuttleworth stated that he considered playgrounds to be 'an essential part of school disciplines for two separate reasons':

...first, that it is considered, especially in large towns, that the physical development of children ought not to be impeded by the absence of proper recreation and exercise; but more especially the play-ground is, in the Glasgow Normal Seminary, rendered a source of moral training. The ordinary routine of the school is broken up by occasional recreation, and the langour and irritation which result from fatigue are thus easily got rid of; and during the period when the children are taking recreation they are not abandoned to the mischievous influences of the street or lane in which their parents reside, but they take that recreation under the superintendence of teachers, who endeavour, by careful attention to what occurs without applying any restraint, to exclude the influence of vicious propensities; and, by degrees to establish in the play-ground mutual good offices among the children, and propriety of demeanour. <sup>11</sup>

Following Stow, Kay-Shuttleworth wished to install a pedagogy which will 'develop the peculiarities of character and especially the moral tendencies of different characters', and, as Hunter points out, the moral superintendence of the play-ground remains the emblem of the means by which this shaping of the person might be achieved 'without applying any restraint'. It is clear, simultaneously, that this humanising and individualising pedagogy shares an imperative with the monitorial régime it wished to reform - that of enclosing children in special purpose-built spaces, where their development might be subjected to a single formative regimen. 'The concern with general levels of health, sentiment and behaviour devolves from regulatory norms whose object is the population rather than the individual'. The school's role in 'removing the formation of

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp 146-7.

<sup>11</sup> Parliamentary Papers A, 1838, Vol. 6, pp 532, 547 cited in Ian Hunter Culture and Government, the Emergence of Literary Education. London, The Macmillan Press, 1988, p.40.

cultural attributes from the care of family and the companionship of streets' places it in a coterminous relationship with other governmental mechanisms which were targeted on the nineteenth-century 'British' city - the hospital, the prison, the asylum and the work-house.<sup>12</sup>

The new organisation of the popular school could be read paradoxically. The abolition of coercion and the encouragement of self-expression which would permit a profusion of individual characters to show themselves, was at the same time, a mechanism for subjecting these characters to new general norms of development. The playground, which provided the space in which children might manifest 'their true character and dispositions ... free and unconstrained', was also the prophylactic space in which these characters and dispositions could be moulded according to new social norms embodied in the 'moral observation' of the teacher. (This has been discussed at some length in the previous chapter.)

But what of the Australian setting? What links has it to the nineteenth century British popular school and their playground sites? The most strikingly different features which can be remarked upon first, is an obvious one, that of space and weather which provided Australian children with a 'life' quite contrasting in this aspect from that of their British and European peers - as a consequence, they had many opportunities to play out of doors and away from the surveillance of adults. Yet, this did not preclude the play rituals of Australian children from being swept up in 'progressive' child-centred pedagogies.

In the South Australian setting, as has been previously discussed, the economic depression of the 1880s and 1890s stands as a climax for the expansion of ideological advice throughout the century, increasing the challenge of the State to find methods to shelter and educate the children of the numerous poor, and opening an unprecedented market for suggestions and initiatives from social theorists.<sup>13</sup> The rise of militant unionism and fear of Socialism were a further stimulus to theories of how society might be welded into a classless whole with the family as its core.

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<sup>12</sup> Ian Hunter, Culture and Government. p.41.

<sup>13</sup> See Brian Dickey, Rations, Residence and Resources. A History of Social Welfare in South Australia since 1836. Adelaide, Wakefield Press, 1986.

During this decade, and its immediate aftermath, the Children's Protection Acts, the Kindergarten Movement, the Child Study organisations, the 'new education' and the infant welfare movement were manifestations of the creation and transmission of ideology by groups strongly committed to advising the State on how best to 'save' the child, and through it the existing structure of society.

As discussed in Chapter 5, the business of schooling, that is, the development of an educational programme for the 'whole child', can be read not as referable to a universal cultural process but as a reference to those specific circumstances in which the techniques of moral individualisation were placed at the disposal of new forms of social investigation and administration. These were the circumstances permitting and accelerating the formation of a purpose-built space (that is, the school, the kindergarten, the playground) in which the development of the self (the 'whole child') became an imperative for the government of the population.

The 'need' for supervised freedom, as articulated in the 'new education' discourses has its surfaces close to that of the world of children's spontaneous play. The teacher's gaze was to operationalise corrective norms through a mode of surveillance and a 'non-coercive' relation to the child, in which the latter comes to see himself or herself according to norms whose very inaccessibility in the teacher establishes the relation of constant emulation. Teachers were encouraged to undertake this superintending role via 'official' discourses.

At the annual conference of the South Australian Public School Teachers Union of 1903, extracts were read about attracting children's interest via the 'importance of initiative in play', from a paper by G.H. Knibbs, State Commissioner of Education in N.S.W., entitled 'Some Aspects of Child Study':

'All impulse towards initiative, towards self-direction, should be very carefully encouraged, not inhibited. And thus we see why intelligent kindergarten can never be formal. To serve its purpose it must be as free as possible, every encouragement being given to the little ones to express their own individualities, in all ways consistent with respect for the individualities of others.'<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> South Australian Education Gazette, (henceforth SAEG), 1903, p.109. Emphasis in original.

This rhetoric was reinforced by Lillian de Lissa who came to Adelaide to set up the first kindergarten in 1906. In 'What Is Kindergarten?' published in the Education Gazette she stated:

...we do not put our emphasis on teaching the three R's. The children are learning more fundamental things, which will be of greater use to themselves and the world. Self-control, self-respect, self-abnegation, self-faith, perseverance, accuracy, truth, co-operation, faithfulness, loyalty, regularity, punctuality, law, order....<sup>15</sup>

Miss De Lissa prefaced these attainable virtues with a lengthy discourse on the fundamental centrality of play:

Play is a self-active representation of the inner representation from inner necessity and impulse. It is the most characteristic manifestation of childhood. It is the centre around which the interests and activities of the young group themselves ... The kindergarten takes this spontaneous play, which practically constitutes the life of the child, and turns it to educational account. Everything the child is trying to understand he (sic) plays, and it is only through play he can understand it.... To crush this play-spirit in childhood is to crush the individuality of man-hood, since it is through play the child sows the first seeds of individuality and creativity.<sup>16</sup>

Regarding 'Free Play', Lillian de Lissa warned:

First, his toys are very apt to be such perfect creations that they represent the one thing only, not calling for any imagination on the part of the child. A perfect toy chills the imagination, and does not fulfil its twofold mission - to stimulate creative activity and satisfy the hunger of the soul for the ideal. Then his games are liable to be rough, disorderly, and without co-operation. These games are well enough in their place but they are not educational.<sup>17</sup>

Much later she expanded on this theme in the prospectus of the Kindergarten

Training College for 1913-14:

...If the first seven years of a child's life is the time for sowing seeds of future life and conduct, then surely it behoves us to see that our citizens are properly guarded during so critical a period, so that only seeds that are worthy are sown. The kindergartens do this by providing an environment that stimulates all the best in the child. Here, under wise discipline he plays happily, learning by that play right relationships with his fellows, courage, self-control, patience, perseverance, loyalty, respect, courtesy, reverence, obedience and willing co-operation. The good influence is not limited to the children attending kindergarten, but is far-reaching, touching brothers, sisters, friends and parents. The kindergartens are making the neighbourhoods by making homes better; they are daily teaching

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<sup>15</sup> SAEG, May 9th, 1906, p.106. This was taken from Lillian de Lissa, The Kindergarten : What is it?. Adelaide, 1906.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp125-126.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127. Emphasis in original.

the sanctity and wealth of child life. The wealth of the nation lies in little children.<sup>18</sup>

After the introduction in South Australia of compulsory education in 1875, and more particularly after the Education Act in 1915, the school was articulated as the most important centre for children's play. Before the establishment of the local school there was seldom a general community centre, particularly in the rural areas, where all able children could, and did, play regularly. With the compulsion of school attendance, children were regularly brought into an environment conducive to common play. In such circumstances play, particularly games, proliferated. As I postulated in the Introduction to this thesis, South Australia the late nineteenth and early twentieth century can be posited as the zenith of traditional games. In the 1890s and early 1900s, playground games were usually managed entirely by the children themselves, with no adult organisation of play and little playground supervision. The greater part of the children's play equipment was made by themselves. Older children played at games which in later decades were to become the province of much younger children. Between 1910 and 1920 playground supervision increased, eliminating much of the rougher elements of play. Organised sports competitions between schools was to become a feature after the First World War, and more particularly from the nineteen twenties, changing forever the concept and symbolism of a leisured class. In the early years of this century, the South Australian teaching fraternity received exhortations from various writers in the Education Gazette about the 'most serious part of the whole of the child's school work, namely play':

Do not look upon play as superfluous. Do not condemn any old game as silly. Do not think you are dealing with an instinct that is to be lopped off as useless or harmful, after the fashion in which some ignorant people would deal with the tonsils or the vermiform appendix. No, play is not a rudimentary faculty. Drill and physical exercises, no matter what their aim might be, can never take its place any more than the morning newspaper can take the place of the evening fairy tale.<sup>19</sup>

The playground was to come under increasing surveillance:

In no part of the school organisation is the resourcefulness and intelligence of the teacher observed to a greater extent than in the playground. Playgrounds are no longer looked upon as merely assembly grounds or

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18 Kindergarten Training College, Prospectus 1913-1914.

19 SAEG, 'The School Site, Surroundings And Furniture : PLAY'. By W. Ramsay Smith, Sept 11th, 1907, p. 212.



recreation grounds, where the teacher marches up and down either as a spy or a policeman; they have become during late years powerful adjuncts to the instruction and discipline of all our better class of schools....

A well-planned playground is not only a place of recreation and instruction, but a place of keen delight, and, as it is said a cathedral is never completed, so each month, each year, sees some additions, some improvement added to the beauty and attractiveness of the place. It should be one part of the school property in which the pupil feels he has a direct and active interest, and towards the completion of which he may do something.<sup>20</sup>

Wilderspin, Stow and Kay-Shuttleworth's vision of the moral superintendence of the playground was to be 'fleshed out', in its South Australian setting, with educative apparatus such as the Shadow Pole Plot, the Geographical Table, the Geographical Plot, a Wind Vane, the Evaporation Tub, a Rain Gauge, a Meteorological Record Board (with a Daily Weather Chart), a Sun Dial, a playground fountain and Sand Trays. Amidst this splendid vision the flag would surmount all.<sup>21</sup> As the writer rather pompously states: I do not consider it necessary to dwell upon the merely recreative aspect of the playground - athletic appliances, swing bars, tennis lawns, cricket pitch, football ground etc'.<sup>22</sup>

However, the actual construction of a school playground was often to prove vexatious:

In the case of a mixed school of large size there should be separate playgrounds for boys and girls. Part should be covered. In many instances the very amount of the playground causes difficulties. It is relatively too large to be tar-paved or made of concrete, and the expense of keeping the surface in an even condition and at a proper level is usually very considerable. Yet the double problem ought to be faced - how to avoid dust in summer and standing water in winter, since both conditions are highly objectionable.<sup>23</sup>

#### Removing Pests and Weeds from the Uncovered Schoolroom : The Moral Landscape

For South Australian children attending school at the beginning of this century, the school playground frequently fell short of 'a children's garden' and the lessons learnt were not always those of brotherly love and moral justice. Describing his Glenelg playground of 1900, Llewellyn Fowler recalled:

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<sup>20</sup> SAEG, June 12th, 1907, p. 127.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., pp.127-129.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p.128. My emphasis.

<sup>23</sup> SAEG, Sept 11th 1907, p. 210.

It was just a dirt yard, with vegetation. It opened out into some paddocks. You weren't supposed to, but you could step over the fence and you were in the paddocks. We used to walk home - best part of a mile and we'd still be in paddocks. Adjoining that was what we called 'the drain' - overflow work built in those days to stop the flooding of Morphetville Road, past the racecourse. And heavy rain would flood those parts. We'd walk barefooted through it to school. We'd play marbles in the playground, on a bit of dirt. I was young and inexperienced and I was not aware to the fact that I was using a big alley and playing boys that were robbing me. I'd fire along a big alley and another opponent - there was quite a number of kids firing the alleys one after another and if they didn't hit the target - you lost the marbles. And, so, often I was firing a big alley and unconsciously I was my own downfall.... I soon woke up to it. The other fellows were winning! There was a girl who was my alley keeper - Lily - used to look after them. We were still kids at school. She used to mind my alleys and the other fellows used to rob them from me.<sup>24</sup>

Moral training was acquired in unintended ways at the turn of the century when 'superintendence' of the playground had not yet reached its full pedagogic force and children organised their own games ... 'We played by the rules. We'd argue a lot (but) the next one would fire a shot (in marbles) and you'd say 'Good shot''.<sup>25</sup>

As schools provided very little play equipment in the early 1900s, whoever owned the equipment was in charge of the game. Boys, like girls, would skip at school, at the pleasure of whomever owned the rope. 'One of the bullies owned it. You'd get your feet tangled up in it, and they would knock you out. The bigger kids used to control their games'.<sup>26</sup> Free of teachers' 'interference', playground activities were much rougher than that of the decades to come. Unorganised forms of cricket and football would be played with footballs, cricket balls and bats contrived from a variety of sources:

**Llewellyn:** A bat was borrowed or pinched and a ball was got from the cast-off bladders from the slaughter yards. We'd sometimes go down to the slaughter yards, butchers used to do all their own slaughtering in those days. Old Peter Cook - if you went to the slaughter yards, you could get one (bladder) thrown at you. We'd blow it full of air,. You'd be holding it tightly, there's be somebody tightly tie a little string around it. It'd last a few kicks. That sort of thing is not done at all

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24 QHL., Llewellyn Fowler.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

**now. They didn't last long but for a few kicks it was worth it. They wouldn't be as shapely as a ball. Few hits or kicks and it would be gone.<sup>27</sup>**

Tops and Hoops were taken to school, if you had them, whereas everyone took knuckle bones to school as access to them was easy. Cherry stones were another ready source of fun. Llewellyn's favourite way to play knucklebones was done to the actions of 'Polly Put the Kettle On'. However, even while Llewellyn was at school, his playground was eventually to come under closer, adult supervision:

**From what I remember going on in those days, the teachers began to keep a watchful eye on people. Because (even) at that early day people had started, amongst school kids, at least, started agitating that (shanghais) and that sort of thing be discontinued. Even as far back as that, mothers and relatives would be concerned about somebody firing their shanghais to knock them out.<sup>28</sup>**

Depending on children's geographical distance to the school, or their lunchtime arrangements, play at school was often a hurried, fragmented affair. A frequent refrain from those interviewed was 'there wasn't much time'. Molly Dutton, who was born in Kingston, in the South-East of South Australia, in 1896, attended St David's Day School at Beaumont, while staying with her grandmother. Talking about its playground, she said:

**You just played. You weren't organised in any way. One group of kids would play one thing, another group another - there was no (adult) organisation about the playground. I think someone kept an eye on our behaviour. There wasn't much time. Although some children used to come to our school very early for the sake of having a play. There was only lunch and a few minutes at recess. I don't think we had an afternoon recess.<sup>29</sup>**

Within the allotted time Molly did play knucklebones - 'Scatters', skippy, hoops, tops, Cat's Cradles and hand clapping games, such as 'Click Clack One, Click Clack Two, Cockadoodle Do,' as well as rounders and hopscotch. 'Ticky, Ticky Touch Wood' was a great favourite of Molly's:

**That was something about chasing a ball and you had to touch wood. And if you were hit with the ball and you couldn't get any wood to touch, then you were out. And you had to run in a circle a couple of times and then someone called out in the middle**

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27 Ibid.

28 Ibid.

29 QHI., Molly Dutton.

**'Ticky Ticky Touch Wood' and those who couldn't touch wood were out.<sup>30</sup>**

For the country children, chores, before and after school occupied a great deal of time, as did travelling to and from school. Walking two to three miles was not considered to be anything out of the ordinary. If the journey was longer and a horse could be spared, one rode to school. Paddy (John) Baker, from Wolseley, near Bordertown, in 1897, as a four year old, walked the two miles in from the farm, everyday to school. He described his playground activities of this era in the following way:

**You played cricket or football on the oval. Senior boys played boys sports - and whatever the girls did - but there was always a monitor in charge to make sure there was no funny business went on, no fooling around.... The girls had their certain areas and the boys theirs. It was controlled very well. The children controlled themselves. And of course there was always a senior monitor walking around always within easy calling distance.<sup>31</sup>**

Senior monitors were often only a year or two older than some of the children and they served an important role in teaching and, in some cases, initiating many of the games played by the school children. As such, they did not present as 'teacher' but as 'friend'. Paddy does not remember too much 'rough and tumble' that got 'out of hand'. The roughest he recalled was: **'A game where the object was to pull the boy off the other's back. That was about one of the roughest games. Your clothes would get torn. Very rough.<sup>32</sup>**

Paddy believed he and his friends made up the game for 'a bit of fun.' Buck-buck of course, is one of the games depicted in Brueghel's painting in 1560, 'Childrens' Games'. Paddy recalls an assortment of play objects but he also remembered that the punishment for bringing knives and shanghais to school was permanent confiscation. But, he says: **'They weren't so fussy about pocket knives.... A pocket knife was a necessity for us bush kids - skinning animals and all this kind of business - making arrows. We used to make bows and arrows and all this kind of**

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30 OHL., Paddy Baker.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

thing'. Bows and arrows, however, were not allowed on the playground, so Paddy and his friends would leave them laying 'near by'.<sup>33</sup>

With the increasing attention to play needs, articulated in 'official' education discourse, play time was extended at the public schools, with the introduction of recess during the afternoon school session, in 1906. Children's time and motility was undergoing increasing change:

Head teachers are hereby instructed that in future provision is to be made on the school timetable for a short recess during the afternoon school session. A break of ten minutes will probably prove sufficient to refresh teachers and pupils and to allow a supply of pure air to enter the schoolrooms.<sup>34</sup>

With the increasing attention to play time came the 'need' for increased surveillance. Playtime, according to the July 17th, 1907 South Australian Education Gazette was to be slotted into the following superintended timetable.

#### GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS

9.10	First bell for Morning School
9.15	Second bell, fall in, inspection
11-11.15	Morning Recess
12.30 -1.30	Recess for Dinner
1.20	First bell for Afternoon School
1.25	Second bell, fall in, inspection
2.25-2.35	Afternoon Recess

#### SUPERVISION OF PLAYGROUND

	Thursday afternoons	
	IV & V,	2nd, 3rd and 4th lesson
Sewing	II & III	1st, 3rd and 4th lesson
	1,	1st, 2nd and 3rd lessons

Narratives of playground activities, prior to the First World War, remained generally free of adult constraint, despite the 'official' rhetoric. As previously described by Paddy Baker, in the country children were still less supervised on the playground than

33 Ibid.

34 SAEG, August 15th, 1906, p. 190.

their city peers. Elizabeth Noonan, aged seven in 1907, walked the two to three miles to the Hornsdale Public School, from her parents' farm, with her elder brother and sister, meeting up with children from neighbouring farms on the way. Inclement weather, she remembered, was no barrier to attendance, neither was excessive heat. Elizabeth remembers that the road between her farm and the school was straight and long. To relieve the boredom the children would throw stones at each other, and that the boys would always fight. **'There wouldn't be a day without a fight'**. It would usually take an hour and a half to get to school, so there was no time to play on arrival.

Play was consigned to morning recess, dinner recess and afternoon recess. **'A big dirt playground. Just an ordinary square block where they could play cricket, we could play skipping and all that type of thing'**. Elizabeth remembers boys and girls of all ages mixing on the playground. **'They may not play together all the time, but if you wanted to play cricket, or something, you could play. We weren't forbidden to mix or anything.'**

A longer time was spent playing after school:

**We had a tennis court (at school) but it wasn't a smart one, but we could play tennis.... We had our own racquets (her family). A lot of them didn't have racquets and we would just play amongst ourselves. Mostly after school we would play. We used to play hopscotch and all those type of things.<sup>35</sup>**

At the age of nine, Elizabeth and her elder sister, Margaret, were sent as weekly boarders to the Convent at Caltowie, run by the Sisters of Saint Joseph. The relative freedom of the Hornsdale playground was swapped for a stricter gendered routine which dictated less playtime and more time spent on feminine accomplishments. Dinnertime and after school was frequently spent on music lessons, dancing lessons and elocution lessons, all extra tuition fees. When Elizabeth did have 'free' time she usually played tennis **'or looked after the little ones, or sat and talked.'** Nurturing the young took up a lot of Elizabeth's time. It was no coincidence that as the surveillance of school playgrounds increased in the twentieth century so too did the division of play, along gendered lines, and according to age. The normalised playground 'where children's true character and

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35 QHI, Elizabeth Noonan.

disposition are exhibited' was not only to become less aggressive than the nineteenth century playground, but more adult supervised and organised.

Agnes Clarke was very aware of the playground division, along age and social 'class' lines, at her school. She attended the Convent of Mercy Catholic School on Glen Osmond Road, from 1909 to 1916, which ran two sections to its schools - what was termed the 'high' school and the 'low' school. The 'high' school actually catered for all primary grades and beyond but it charged higher fees than the 'low' school.

Just as the one big school room was divided into a Higher School section and a Primary section, so was the asphalt playground:

**The low school children played one end and we played the other. It was a big area and all the left hand side, where we came in the lane, the primary school children played, and on the right hand side there was a big garden and the convent, which is still there, and we played there, and that's where the tennis court was. We played on that side. We had our lunch on that side and the primary school had their lunch on the other.<sup>36</sup>**

Eileen O'Loughlin, who was born on a farm in Caltowie, in 1901, attended both public and Catholic schools. At the age of eight she commenced her schooling at the Higher Primary School Section at Cabra Convent, at Cumberland Park. After eighteen months she and her brothers were sent to St Joseph's school at Mitcham.

**Father was a bit dissatisfied with the boys. They (her parents) wanted the boys to go downstairs to the primary school and the Sisters wouldn't hear of it! So they took us away altogether. They had what they called the primary school and we were not allowed to mix with them or play with them. The primary school children had their own playground. They (our parents) paid by term for us and the others paid sixpence a week. The Sisters did not believe that we should mix with the poorer children.<sup>37</sup>**

At Cabra, Eileen played on a specially set aside playing area that included a lot of tennis courts. 'We just used to play around - chase each other around'. At St Joseph's, Mitcham, the playground was less salubrious. 'The boys used to play marbles and we girls used to play knucklebones in the season. Just out in

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36 QHI., Agnes Clarke.

37 QHI., Eileen O'Loughlin.

the yard'. Eileen was eleven when her family moved back to the country. 'Father took over a property called Woodlands and

we went to what they called Butler's Bridge Public School there. We were there until the drought moved us on a bit further'. Eileen contracted typhoid fever when she was thirteen, and her schooling ceased at Butler's Bridge.

At this school the playground consisted of 'About an acre of land. It was a garden. There was no tennis court there.... The boys played on one side of the school and we'd play on the other. The boys and girls didn't play together'. When asked what separated the boys from the girls, Eileen laughed and replied 'An imaginary line!'

Superintended gender divisions would 'melt away' on Eileen's way home from school. Apart from boys and girls chasing each other 'the boys would climb trees looking for birds nests.... We had to cross the river and we'd go there looking for tadpoles'. The boys would find a stick and sharpen both ends and play 'pigeon toss' or 'hit the stone'.

#### The Lore of the Playground versus the Superintending Gaze

Dividing the school playground upset many children who wished to play, and spend time, with their siblings. Kathleen McLean, attended Wellington Road (It is now known as Portrush Road) School from 1904, and the Goodwood School from the age of nine. She vividly remembers not seeing much of her brother:

**But not for want of trying. There used to be a division - a gateway - there, between the boys and the girls, (playgrounds) and we always used to go there at morning recess and have a few words. I never remember walking home from school with him much because I was always kept in (for) talking.<sup>38</sup>**

Kathleen described her playground at Goodwood:

**At the side of the building there was a block of land that went from one street to the other and everybody used to play out there. They (the boys) had their playground in front of the premises. We all used to play keeping the ball away and that would take a lot of room. And we used to play cricket, the girls with a soft ball and a home-made bat. We played hopscotch ...**



marked it off into six like they do now. And of course if you got on a line you were out. Then there was one that went 'two, two, one, two' like that. (The number of hops in the base.) We used to play skipping or hide and seek ... only the one game (at a time) ... that's all there would be time for in recess time.<sup>39</sup>

Rituals abounded in the uncovered schoolroom. Kathleen described the all important choosing who would go 'he'. 'We used to say 'One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven; All Good Men Must Go To Heaven''. After this ritual was carried out Kathleen said 'We'd only have time for a couple of hides!' Statues was another absorbing group game. 'A girl would turn her back to us, then she'd turn round quickly and we'd have to stay just how we were'.

Skipping was hard to learn, according to Kathleen, 'We used to play with two ropes. None of us were very expert'. A big rope, not provided by the school, was used for 'calling in' games.

We used to skip A,B,C,D,E and we'd get up there, and that was going to be our husband's name - I think of a boys name. Then - 'When were we getting married?' 'This year? Next year? Sometime? Never?' We'd do that. 'What does he do for a living?' 'Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Sailor'. 'How many children are you going to have?' - 'Oh, dozens!'<sup>40</sup>

As well as describing playing cherry stones, knuckle bones, (which she continued to play in High School) Kathleen delineated the girls' version of Tip Cat. Tip Cat was a forerunner to cricket. It required a long stick, or board, about two and a half feet long; a second thin stick, about six inches, narrowed at both ends, for 'the cat' and a hole dug in the ground. Children would use the long stick to flip up the sharpened stick (the cat), off the ground and hit it into the hole. This was usually played well away from the teacher's gaze:

It was a piece of board like that (gestures to the length of her coffee table), about two and a half feet long, and a flat piece on this. It was put on so that it had a long end, we didn't have it sharp, just an ordinary piece of wood. And you'd hit this end with a piece of stick and it would fly up - I wouldn't say it was dangerous unless (like the boys) they had it sharpened.<sup>41</sup>

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39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

Within this 'world' of game playing, children usually 'sorted out' their own difficulties. If children needed 'putting in their place' by Kathleen, her usual retort was:

**Tell Tale, pick a nail,  
Tied it to the cow's tail,  
When the cow begins to wee,  
You shall have a cup of tea.<sup>42</sup>**

The choice of children's games was, however, increasingly subject to adult sanction. Tip Cat was one of the first games to be banned by the South Australian Education Department. Colin Chant, who later became a teacher, remembers playing it at Compton Downs School (about four miles from Mt Gambier), during his early years of schooling, circa 1910-1915, prior to its rapid demise:

I made a cat with an old piece of broom handle about three inches long, that's the cat - a whittled point at each end, and you'd have part of a broom handle, I suppose about half a broom handle at least, might be a bit longer, and you'd have a hole in the ground, and I think you had, three times you had to lift it out of the hole and you had to lift it out without someone catching it before it hit the ground. So you'd keep it fairly low. And then the last one, you'd put it in the front of the hole - because it'd be sitting up like that - and the idea is you tipped it, cause it to fly up, and then you'd belt it as hard as you could belt it, and you'd do a run like a rounder before someone got it. And they'd have to, I think, carry it back to the hole, as far as I know. I can remember at Compton at one stage the Head was walking home from lunch - from the house back to the classroom - and he got a crack with the cat on the side of the head - and that was the end of Tip Cat for that school. Oh it was popular with the boys - they loved to get back and belt that cat as far as they could - and, if you weren't caught, you tipped that and that would fly up and you'd belt it. You had to have a pretty good eye to belt it in the right spot - with a broom handle. So you had to be pretty accurate, good practice for cricket.<sup>43</sup>

The players themselves, as well as the games became the object of scrutiny. Surveillance of the playground increased along age-segregation margins, as well as along gender divisions. The time-honoured practice of older children supervising, protecting and initiating play with, and of, the younger children was to be quelled officially: 'The high school pupils should be kept as much as possible from consorting with the younger

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42     Ibid.

43     The Fun 'n Games Project, Henley and Grange, S.A. 1984-1985. (henceforth Fun 'n Games.) Colin Chant.

children. Even in smaller schools they should have their own playground or sports ground'.<sup>44</sup>

In practice, distance from Adelaide, and size of the school, lessened the constraints of such a dictum. Horrie Simpson, began at the Oodnadatta school in 1912, at the age of seven. The school catered for thirty to thirty five white and Afghan children. It was a one teacher (sometimes two teacher school) constructed from iron sheeting. Its nearest neighbour 'was Williams Creek, one hundred and twenty two miles away, then the Maree School, two hundred and forty miles from Oodnadatta, and then Alice Springs School.' Horrie remembers:

We were all friends. Until we got up into the higher classes we sat anywhere. Then the boys sat together and the girls sat together. Each seat contained two people. But as juniors I think it was all mixed up. The last school master, I remember he'd just come out of the university, and he was alright. We used to play cards in the lessons. Euchre. He was good, and half the kids were outside or talking and messing around.<sup>45</sup>

Such informality transferred to the playground.

We were never separated. If the girls did play with us we'd play things like rounders, Red Rover All Over. Yelling and squealing. Some would sing out 'Wolf has gone to Devonshire, won't be back for Seven Years, Run sheep run' and, of course, away we'd go and out would come the wolf. With the screaming and yelling, you'd think they was getting killed.<sup>46</sup>

Playing 'Buttons' was a favourite playground activity which necessitated considerable ingenuity in acquiring the necessary buttons:

(We'd) just see if we could save them. After school we'd go down to the rubbish heap and out where the blacks camp used to be, of course, quite a lot of those old blacks died with the 'flu in 1919, and all the old clothes were discarded and we'd go there with pocket knives and cut the buttons off their old trousers and that. It's a wonder we never got diseases.

Then, at school, whoever possessed buttons could join in:

We'd put up a stick about from here (gestures) to the door and each one would collect the buttons and then you'd put them on your hand and toss them up in the air, and all that came up

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44 South Australian Parliamentary Papers (henceforth SAPP), 1912, no.27, p.69.

45 QHI., Horrie Simpson.

46 Ibid.

right, you'd take. Then the next one would have a go until all the buttons were gone. I used to raid mother's sewing basket all the time and take her good buttons to school.<sup>47</sup>

But not all games were played together, or by both sexes. Hopscotch was not played by Horrie, or the other boys. Marbles was definitely 'a boy's game' at Oodnadatta:

Used to play what they called Holey - three holes and you'd have to fire to get into this first hole and then the next one and so on. The first one in there got the marbles. Then there used to be a ring game - we'd draw a big ring and all the marbles would be put in the centre and you would have your Taw and you'd fire that at the marbles in the centre of the ring and if you knocked one out then you got another shot until you missed then the next one would have a shot. I have still got all my marbles out there somewhere. We had a lot of 'bottlies' out of the lemonade bottles. We could buy marbles. When the marble season came in the stores would give out marbles - I think you could get a dozen marbles for threepence. There were stinkies - they were made out of sort of clay and painted, and if you hit them too hard against anything they would break - so we called them stinkies. Somebody would get a fad of suggesting a game of marbles, then it would take on - everybody would be playing marbles - but like everything else, they get tired of them and it would phase out. Then you would get tops, spinning tops, and hoops.<sup>48</sup>

The Oodnadatta boys reserved 'the right' to play hoops to themselves. Because of the centrality of the railway to Oodnadatta, Horrie described playing hoops as 'playing trains': 'We used to get these iron tyres and push them along - push them for miles playing trains, with your hands. Hoops, well, the blacksmith used to make them out of round iron and weld them together and we'd run along with our stick'. Horrie would fetch his hoop from his house, 'one hundred yards from the school', during dinner recess and either leave it in the playground or return it home. Other boys did likewise. Playing with a 'tennis' ball occupied many playground hours.

We used to have a lot of fun with a tennis ball. Chasing each other around the school and belting it at each other. That was a lovely game until somebody knocked the school master's hat off and that was the end of that. He just came round the corner and someone threw the ball at me and it bounced off me and knocked his hat off. Branders.... It used to hurt, I can tell you.<sup>49</sup>

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47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid.

Play activities were unfettered by the wearing of shoes. 'Our feet were that hard we used to run over rubbish heaps with glass bottles broken and never cut our feet. I think it was only when the Inspector came along we had to wear shoes'.<sup>50</sup>

Eileen Said, born in Riverton in 1907, moved to Monteith Settlement in 1909, where her family pioneered on an irrigation settlement. She started school in 1915. Economic survival dominated the settlers lives at Monteith and chores before and after school, for girls and boys, were a necessity, so they rarely played before or after school in the yard. Playtime at school was conducted in an adjoining, unsupervised paddock:

There wasn't any levelling off. When we had this croquet set (a gift to the school), it was just driven into the ground and you just played on the side of the hill where the school was, in those days. Boys didn't play with the girls.... Just a space. Nothing would be marked off or anything. They would be told that's where you would play. In those days you did what you were told. (With the girls) everyone would join in. Anyone that was big enough. Perhaps the tiny ones would have a game of their own. Everything was just sort of made up. There was plenty of running. Youngsters in the country, when they get out in the open, they just run around.<sup>51</sup>

The imperative of moral superintendence was pursued more closely in suburban areas. In contrast to Eileen Said, Jean Sudlow's Hindmarsh playground was a specially delineated asphalt area, fenced and divided from the boys area. With an enrolment of one thousand children, supervision was diligent. Contact was:

Unofficial - the girls would come to the gate or the boys would come to the gate, but you weren't allowed to go through. Teachers made sure you kept tidy and no fights. We had a playground open on the parklands opposite the school. I was in year seven, that was later though (when it opened). I think it is still there. I was a prefect and we had to make sure they (the children) didn't abuse the privilege. They had to cross Port Road. You had to prefect that as well. And that was boys and girls. We had to report anything that happened. The kids were pretty good really.<sup>52</sup>

Jean described the public playground as having a range of swings, see-saws and things to climb on. It was a popular out of school hours space. The school playground was

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50 Ibid.

51 QHI., Eileen Said.

52 QHI., Jean Sudlow.

devoid of fixed apparatus so time was spent playing hopscotch - 'They would draw them all over the schoolyard. There was so many different ways of drawing them. There was lots of different ones (games), skipping, knucklebones and 'cat's cradle'.<sup>53</sup>

Mrs Thelma Williams, attended Hindmarsh Primary with Jean. Her description of the playground is evocative:

The school came round almost like a letter E - that was the Elizabethan style of doing houses years ago - middle section, the Headmaster's office was there. On the right hand side of the building was the playground for the little ones, which we didn't go across. Then, the girl's yard came next and dividing the end of this classroom with the back of a building that came in from Port Road on the other side was this very high iron gate. The only contact the boys had with the girls was the boys' toilets came back to back with the girls' toilet and they delighted in seeing if they could wee over the fence.

I dare say the boys played sport of some description but as we had a nine foot solid iron gate between the boys yard and the girls yard, I don't think we saw too much of what they did. Funny thing, I am wondering if I ever went back to Hindmarsh school, would that enormous gate have shrunk? We couldn't see over it.<sup>54</sup>

Thelma also remembers that the playground had many uses:

Down on the Milner Street side of the playground were a few trees. There was a flagpole which we regularly saluted. There we learnt the process of the sun movement by looking at the shadow. We stood outside near this flagpole and we'd measure how long it was ... shadows alter in the summer and winter. If the sun is overhead the shadow is small isn't it. That sort of thing we did. And I remember standing out in the yard learning about the clouds, standing by the area where the pole was. But the yard was asphalt and we had seats around it. I remember in Grade seven not playing so many games, I used to do my crochet work. They used to call me Little Miss Industrious.<sup>55</sup>

Mrs Williams vividly recalled playing jumping, hopscotch and skipping. Of skipping,

Thelma recalled:

We were adept at that. You had a double rope and you had the rope tied around the middle of the person at each end and sort of entwined it. They have skipping competitions in America now - we did that at school. I took a skipping rope to school - long

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53 Ibid.

54 QHI, Mrs Williams.

55 Ibid.

skipping rope with handles on each end. That was your individual rope and then, if you were lucky, you had a hanker rope and you coiled it up by rolling it around your arm, then wrapping the rope around the middle and tying it on your schoolbag. And if you were the proud possessor of one of those you were very popular because you had the school rope. And if you wanted to be nasty you weren't going to let your rope out that day. There was a bit of a power structure with your rope.<sup>56</sup>

With so many children at Hindmarsh in the school yard, Thelma remembers that any disturbances 'would be promptly put down by the teachers'. The continuous and total gaze that would assist the teachers in coming to know the children as individuals, 'their true characters and dispositions', was evident in the emergence of 'yard duty':

**When we were let out for recess the teachers came out and stood on yard duty, and the same lunch time. There was always a teacher on yard duty. I got into terrible trouble once, when I was only in the infant class. My mother gave me a hard boiled egg and some bread and butter and I peeled this egg and dropped all the peel down by the side of me, in the shed where we were eating our lunch. And the teacher came up and reprimanded me. We were supervised - apparently supervised while we ate our lunches too!** <sup>57</sup>

Before schooling extended into the High School, and age segregation impinged on children's consciousness and their play practices, a common refrain from these men and women interviewed who were born prior to World War one was 'all we ever seemed to do was run about'. Boisterous and exuberant running and chasey games were a dominant motif of early school playgrounds where children organised themselves generally free of a superintending gaze.

Narratives are full of a wealth of detail about 'Oranges and Lemons', 'Fill the Gap', 'Hide and Seek', 'Run Sheep Run', 'Foxes and Geese' and rougher games, such as 'Hi jiggy-jig-jig' and 'High Cock a Lorum'. That this was a central part of children's playground activities is born out in other South Australian's memories:

A regular and a very popular game was - one boy stood with his back against the wall and the team put their head to tail (of the boys in front of them), bent down and (they'd) run and they'd jump (on the backs of other boys). And when you got them all on, it was then 'Hi, jiggy-jig-jig, I'd ride a pig, If you see a monkey, Ride him on a pig'... something like that. And then it

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56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.

was your turn to go down and if you didn't all get on, and you couldn't buck them off while they were singing the song - you won. <sup>58</sup>

Jack Williams, who was born at Balaklava in 1904, attended school at Gawler, from the age of seven. He recalls in 'High Cock Alorum':

There'd be four of you. One'd stand up against the wall and another one'd put his head in there (the standing boy's chest) and bend over like that, and the next one behind, and then they'd run and jump on top of the back. Well, if you let them down, they had another chance. But if you stood up, until they said, 'high cock alorum, jig, jig, jig, ever seen a monkey on a pig?' and didn't go down with the weight it was their turn to go in. <sup>59</sup>

#### Preparing the way for team games : The Game of Life

Narratives of this era also reveal that great attention was paid to whom would be chosen to go 'He' or 'It' in chasey and running games as it vested enormous power in that fortunate individual. Only 'He' had the power to cry 'Barleys' or 'Pass Over' or 'Home Free', or some other appropriate catch-cry. 'He' could be chosen across age-levels, by mutual consent or, more often the ritual of counting-out rhymes. Favourites were 'Eanie, Meanie, Miney, Mo'. and 'One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven, All good men must go to Heaven'. Later, 'One Potato, Two Potato, Three Potato, Four; Five Potato, Six Potato, Seven Potato More' gained currency. The use of 'It' and 'He' was differentiated according to gender. 'It' being more regularly recalled as being used by girls.<sup>60</sup>

An interesting factor about 'He' and 'It', in its most elementary forms, was that each player was in direct and individual relationship with the 'He' or 'It', whilst surrounded by, but not interacting with, other children. Later, as the complexity of 'He' games increased, and the skill of the players, the children gained rudimentary experience of team formations, with 'sides' being formed:

A popular two team game was Cat and Mouse, which was often extended to more teams, depending on the number of children. Mrs Collette describes her version:

Well, you stand in lines. About four lines, depending on how many kids you've got - and sort of in lines that way (gestures) - and they all stand

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58 Fun 'n Games. Alan Wilson.

59 S.A. Speaks. Jack Williams.

60 See, in particular, QHL., Coralie Green for details of ritualised 'counting out'.



holding hands like that in lines, you see. And then there's one cat and a mouse, and they're outside. And then the cat chases the mouse up and down the lines, you know. And there's usually someone in control who says 'change'. And they (the children) all turn round, you see, so that alters direction. They can't go through those lines. That was Cat and Mouse.<sup>61</sup>

Circle games, which were accompanied by singing, were also popular, such as 'Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush', 'Lucy Locket', 'Ring a Ring a Roses' (sic), 'London Bridge' and 'Go In and Out the Window'. They were, of course, less intricate than the team games. Mrs Cann vividly described, and sang, the following:

'Go In and Out the Window'.... You stood in a ring with your hands looped ... 'cos they wouldn't be as big as my arms now - catching hold of the next one - and a little girl'd go in and out the window. Or a boy it could be in that case - and it says, 'go in and out the window' - you repeat that three times, 'go in and out the window - as we are born today.' This is singing too. 'Go in and face your loved one, go in and face your loved one, go in and face your loved one - as we are born today.' And they go in and kneel. 'I kneel because I love you,' the kids all sing that, 'I kneel because I love you, I kneel because I love you - as we are born today.' And then, after they kneel - the one that's kneeling gets up and stands in that child's place and the other one runs around.<sup>62</sup>

Certainly the play objects of this pre-World War One era, and its immediate aftermath, showed considerable ingenuity on the part of children. On the West Coast of South Australia, and in arid areas generally, quondong stones were put to many play uses. Quondong stones are obtained from a shrub or small tree of the dry country in South Australia bearing a globular, usually bright red, fruit with a deeply wrinkled stone containing an edible kernel. Commonly referred to as a wild peach, Edie King remembers:

We used to have a little round, er...we used to call them wild peaches and you put them (the stones) on a string and you used to hit them. What did they call them - Quondongs, weren't they? We used to have wild peaches. We used to screw a hole through - they're woody things - and put the string through and then two of us used to - well we had quite a few, but we used to have only two to play it (and hit it) - just with the string, and hit to break them.<sup>63</sup>

Others recall using quondongs as marbles and collecting bags full of the stones to take to school. Brice (Lewis) Wheaton, who was born in Manoora, in 1908, recalls necklaces being made from quondongs, while his wife, Elsie, born ten years later, recalls playing chinese checkers at Gilles Street school in Adelaide, with quondong seeds 'dyed

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61 Fun 'n Games. Mrs Collette.

62 Fun 'n Games. Mrs Mann.

63 Fun 'n Games. Edie King.

with a vegetable dye or dipped in ink.’<sup>64</sup> As well, Brice recalls making an alternative to sponge rubber balls which, while highly prized, were not always within his grasp:

In the country they used to make the snotty gobble balls. That was the latex from the quondong. You’d wind that round and round until you got a ball as big as a golf ball. That was their name - snotty gobble balls! (Much laughter) Yes, just about the size of a golf ball - as much as you could get from the quondongs, you know the wild peach.<sup>65</sup>

The period during and after the First World War brought the beginnings of widespread commercial influence on play, which was to dominate advertisements and advice literature in the 1920s and 1930s. With the advent of football and cricket practice, many of the running games of the playground were subsumed. Tip Cat and Buck-Buck, along with other rough play was deemed to be unsuitable on asphalt playgrounds in confined spaces. Teacher coaching of children in organised sports was encouraged by the South Australian Education Department, improving the fitness of children through competition and challenge improved their chances ‘in the game of life’. Activity for girls with the organisation of netball and hockey and other team games increased and the popularity of swapping games, scrapbooks, prickbooks, transfers, collecting postcards and swapping Cole’s Funny Picture Book, No. 1 (first published in 1879) introduced a quieter, more organised and ‘tamed’ atmosphere to the school playground. Children’s sections in newspapers increasingly offered suggestions for ‘organised’ play.<sup>66</sup>

But this is not to suggest that the discourses informing children’s supervised play practice, at school, and specifically in the purpose built-space of the playground were taken up in a uniform manner.

The ‘new education’, with its individualised child-centred pedagogy, was ‘adopted’ precisely because it could be ‘taken up’ within disparate modes, satisfying a variety of

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64 OHI., Elsie and Brice Wheaton.

65 OHI., Brice Wheaton.

66 Even Church newspapers such as The Southern Cross (Catholic) had a section devoted especially to its ‘younger readers’. Daily news and weekly papers invited children to become members of their ‘club’ and encouraged the swapping of jokes and riddles as well as the formation of ‘collections’.

people holding different interests and positions, and rearticulated with other, sometimes theoretically quite distinct, approaches. Thus, the articulation of the centrality of play to children's lives satisfied the reformers concerned with juvenile crime, the emergent professional-managerial 'class', the 'child-savers', the eugenics movement adherents, the calls for freedom of the individual (at its zenith after World War I), and with those persons who perceived a need to keep the proletariat 'in their place', and with un-named other demands, all at the same time and in different and contradictory ways.

Coterminously, the targets of these new 'normalising practices', the objects of an increasing 'scientific enquiry', continued to try and avoid the superintending eye on the playground. Informal activities continued. Although cigarette cards were a part of the school playground prior to World War I, and were avidly collected, the volume of production and promotion was to rapidly increase in later years. They were a source of great pride of ownership and barter for several decades. As paper availability increased, particularly after the First World War, so did the usage. Mr Pedlar remembers that while gambling in any shape or form was officially 'frowned upon', there was a unique 'currency' of cigarette cards in the playground:

They had cards, cigarette cards, in those days every packet of cigarettes had a card in it, with a different view or different footballer, or something like that. And you'd throw them against the wall, and if they turned face up, that'd be yours. And if they fell down, they wouldn't be.<sup>67</sup>

Boys devised all sorts of games to win cigarette cards, as opposed to merely swapping cards:

They had pictures of prominent sportsmen, politicians, soldiers, birds or animals, and they were all in certain groups which you'd eventually try to get. In schools, another game was played where you, where there wasn't the opportunity to get them (when you didn't have many of your own). They (the cards) were round on the edges, and you paste a stiff piece of cardboard on the back of them. And you'd take it in turns by throwing this cigarette cards, or your toy-er as we called it, from our best position, alongside the stone wall. If, for instance, I hit the stone wall, and dropped down alongside it - well, the next one throwing his would try and get it on mine and what they called 'Kiss Me'. And if they did, if they touched my card, well I'd have to go back and go again.

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67 Fun 'n Games. Mr. Pedlar.

Anyway, you'd go on until, right, you got your winner. And if you were playing for one card they gave you one card - sometimes maybe two cards. It was a small form of betting!<sup>68</sup>

While children were exhorted by their teachers to never lie and dutifully inscribed maxims in their copybook about 'truth', 'duty' and 'obedience', on the playground, Selby Chinnery, born in 1909 at Magill, remembers at Magill Primary School 'cheats used to saturate their cards to stick to the wall', in order to add to their collection of cards.<sup>69</sup> Ownership of cigarette cards was often hotly contested:

If we had loads, you know, we used to put them up against a wall and flick - and the ones you knocked down with your flick, you had. You see. Mind you, there was more fights over that than anything. Because, if you didn't flick any down - whose cards were along there, he had all those that fall down.<sup>70</sup>

Girls collected cigarette cards, scrap books and postcards as well as prickbooks and pictures from Nestles and Tobler chocolates. Thelma William's declares 'We all collected cigarette cards ... and put them in an album. You didn't paste them in - because they were a great source of exchange.... You could take them to school and exchange them at school in playtime.'<sup>71</sup>

Another form of playground currency was Cole's Funny Picture Book No. 1. The fortunate owners would bring their copy to school and loan it during the recess breaks, often in return for another swap or loan of appropriate value. This too, as I have previously stated, added to a quieter, more orderly playground. The jokes and riddles were committed to memory, and much repeated. Thelma Williams recalls:

We were brought up on Cole's Funny Picture Book. And in there, of course, were lots of riddles. You'd meet and have riddles ... 'Opens like a barn door, shuts like a trap, you'll think of forty things before you think of that.' You know what it is? - A pair of ladies corsets! They did up with little snaps in the front.

And 'What is it?' - Went upstairs black and white and came down red all over? - A newspaper. And then we liked to write little rhymes by writing just letters and you had to work out

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68 Fun 'n Games. Mr. Opie.

69 Speaking of the Past. Voices of South Australia. Selby Chinnery, p.17.

70 Fun 'n Games. Mrs Hall.

71 OHI., Thelma Williams.

what it meant. 'MT (and two) GG's' and that spelt 'Empty Gee Gee' - empty horse! We were quite versed in a lot of these, and if anybody got a new one.... Oh, yes ... 'YY (two Y's) UR, YYUB, ICURYY4Me.' 'Too wise you are, too wise you be, I see you are too wise for me.' (Laughter)<sup>72</sup>

Thelma's most vivid memory of Cole's Funny Picture Book is of the pictures:

The picture in that, that impressed us the most, several impressed me, but it was the whipping machine.

There was these boys all lined up and strapped to a bar and this machine came around on a round core, with canes all sticking out. And the man at the end turned the handle and, of course, these poor boys, as the canes came around, got their behinds whipped.

We really thought that that's what went on. Also, if anybody smoked they would turn into a screw. That was in Cole's book. Every home, I think, had a Cole's Funny Picture Book. It was a treasure.<sup>73</sup>

Moral precepts could be utilised in various forms. Writing in autograph books revealed some amazing linguistic contrivances. One did not have to own an autograph book to partake in 'the fun'.

Coralie Green: I didn't have one. My autograph was in all the others. I don't think I ever asked for one. When you are poor you just get the message so early that you don't ask for what you want if it can't be afforded. I didn't really feel deprived - sounds silly doesn't it. But I didn't. It wasn't something I needed. I liked giving others my autograph but I never really aspired to have one myself.

(I'd put) all sorts of messages ... 'By hook or by crook I'll be first in this book' or 'last in this book'. Something like that.<sup>74</sup>

The more adventurous than Coralie Green would dash off much loved ditties like 'First comes, love, Then comes marriage, Then comes (friend's name) with a baby carriage', or 'The lightening flashed, The thunder roared, The powers of heaven were shaken, The little pig rolled up his tail, And ran to save his bacon'.<sup>75</sup>

Francis Noonan recalls that his following effort, scribed in his autograph book, was removed by his mother:

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72 QHL, Thelma Williams.

73 QHL, Thelma Williams.

74 QHL, Coralie Green.

75 QHL, See Wheaton, Ellis and Venables.

The devil made the north wind,  
 To blow the skirts knee high,  
 But God was just and made the dust  
 To blind the bad man's eye.<sup>76</sup>

While these swapping and collecting games did serve to quieten the playground from that of their early counterparts, as noted by Sutton-Smith in The Games of New Zealand Children, children still organised activities for themselves that drew on their own ingenuity, although they were increasingly team activities. Felix Kenny remembers a lot of catching and throwing games that helped in later development of bowling skills in cricket:

We used to play a game at school - Egg in the Hat. You'd all put your hats along a row, and somebody would be the marker and have a tennis ball. And they'd go along and whose ever hat they dropped it in, you had to go and pick it up. And the others ran away. And (you'd) try and hit them with the tennis ball. And if you missed, you'd have to go as the head man.<sup>77</sup>

Girls' usage of tennis or small rubber balls increased markedly in this period.

Betty Nottage remembers playing active ball games such as Donkey:

Oh, Donkey! We played Donkey. The one just used to stay out the front and we all used to stay round in a circle and you'd throw the ball over your head, and someone'd catch it. And they'd sing out Donkey - and you'd have to turn around and see who had it.

They'd put it behind their back, you all stand behind their backs. And you had to guess who had that. And if you guessed right, well that person went out.<sup>78</sup>

From the 1920s onwards with the increase in paper and plastic products designed for children's amusement and the emerging influence of the 'toy business', children's playground free activities were impinged upon by adult-designed and marketed apparatus, such as the yo-yo. As well the speed of the playground increased rapidly with the frequency of usage of the ball, in its many guises, and great importance was attributed by the children, teachers and parents to organised 'team' sports and recreation for children. This allowed less time for older children to 'just sit around'.

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76 QHI., Francis Noonan.

77 Fun 'n Games. Felix Kenny.

78 Fun 'n Games. Betty Nottage.

As South Australia became increasingly urbanised there was a speedy demise of some of the older traditional games, Whipping Tops and Hoops being replaced by spinning tops and cane hoops, for example. Practically all the play activities of the older primary aged child (eleven or more years of age) were now channelled into organised sports, whereas in the earlier days children in this age group had maintained the more complex traditional games. Spontaneous play amongst older children did not cease, rather, more time was spent on their own unorganised forms of the major sports, in preparation for the 'real' event. But, these games, rather than leading to new inventions, led back into honing the major skills of the major sports themselves.

Younger children, on the other hand, maintained and extended the older traditional games which had been played by their predecessors. Singing games, accompanying the slow and elaborate hand-clapping games, became more the province of eight and nine year olds, rather than teen-aged girls, and, in many cases sung rhymes were used now to 'speed-up' active skipping and ball-bouncing games.

The ideology of individual play was somewhat subsumed in the official discourses of the more socially conscious welfare society of the Depression era, and subsequently beyond, and collaborative games were posited as an exercise of social, rather than individual, competence. It is interesting to trace in the interviewees' narratives, therefore, that as the 1930s ushered in a proliferation of organised team sport the incidence of 'unorganised' playground pranks increased. While probably of a much older origin, many of the men and women recalled playing tricks on their friends such as 'My father has cut my finger off'. Usually a child (frequently a boy, according to oral memory) would quietly show another child a finger which would be lying in a tobacco tin. Claiming that his or her father accidentally cut it off, the finger would be lying on cotton wool, apparently covered with blood. After achieving the desired effect, the trickster would reveal a hole in the bottom of the tin through which the finger had been pushed. Red ink or cochineal would have been liberally applied to simulate the blood.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Don Linke recalls that his variation was to say that he had found a finger by the roadside and he would tie string around the base of the finger 'to make it look pale'. QHI., Don Linke.

As increased adult supervision of the playground resulted in less physical violence amongst boys, in particular, both boys and girls resorted to verbal taunts as a power exercise. The physical attributes, characteristics and personal habits of children became objects of ridicule. Being fat made one a constant target for teasing. Favourites recalled ranging from **'Big fat hog, You look like a fish, And stink like a dog'** to **'Fatty in the teapot, Skinny in the spout. Fatty blew off, And Skinny blew out'**.<sup>80</sup> Elsie Wheaton remembered being caught out by the teasing rhyme **'Do you like lollies?'** **'Yes. (the reply) 'Then go upstairs and kiss your dollies'**.<sup>81</sup> Variations of these teasing rhymes abounded, from **'You know what?'** **'What'** **'You're mad and I'm not'** to **'Why?'** **'Because Y's a crooked letter and Z's no better'**.<sup>82</sup>

The school playground was a wonderful place to try out slang. One could insult one's friends and enemies alike in vigorous slanging matches with such phrases as **'thick as a brick'**, **'not the full quid'** (pound), or **'You've got ants in your pants'**. Boys would call girls **'tarts'**, although, as Ross Campbell recalls, **'It was a vaguely disparaging term but was not intended to reflect on their moral character'**.<sup>83</sup> **'Foreign'** sounding names would present as a target of such verbal play. Many children with German family names were the butt of **'German sausage'** taunts.<sup>84</sup> The need for argot by children in the playground evidences a desire to conform with one's peers and exclude adults from this sub-culture.

As children's play came to be increasingly focused on the school playground site, and not in the streets or community, as the 1930s drew to a close, the lack of physical space contained the types of unorganised activities children were involved in. Increasingly, teachers closely superintended the playtime of children. Older girls were discouraged from **'walking around with our arms around each other'** as ceaseless group

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80 See QHI., Barber; Linke.

81 QHI., Elsie Wheaton.

82 QHI., Don Linke.

83 Ross Campbell. An Urge to Laugh. Wildcat Press, Sydney, 1981, p.4.

84 QHI., Coralie Green.



activity became 'the norm'.<sup>85</sup> Some playground activities, such as 'I spy' and 'Stagecoach', were gradually incorporated into classroom based activities. Coterminously, many of the numerous running and skipping activities were adopted as part of an organised physical education program.

Until the 1920s, athletics - that is, running, jumping and so on - were relatively more important than organised team games. Inter school, and intra school, sports days and carnivals assumed priority in later periods precisely because the conditions of possibility of their theorisation and production was made possible by the coterminous child-centred pedagogies which postulated 'natural' 'development', based on biological processes and scientific rationality. This combined with the advancement of practices of education and training which had to do with establishing social relations and their subsequent imbrication in the materiality of specified, regulated forms of activity.

Just as military or cadet type drill had been the first regular kind of teacher control over children's leisure, with its strong advocacy of physical exercise and calisthenics, organised team sport was lauded for its ability to train future citizens in 'the game of life'. Institutions such as The Boy Scouts, the YMCA and Our Boys' Institute were early imbued with the ideals of character building.

As early as 1907, Howard Johnson selected over four hundred games and assigned them forty-six educational values, such as for mind, eye, body, muscle-sense, and the like which influenced the early American playground movement, which in turn, influenced the Australian playground movement. The first Handbook for the Boy Scouts, in 1911, contains many games that were supposed to provide constructive outlets for a long list of basis instincts.<sup>86</sup> Joseph Lee argued in the nineteen twenties that the modern child could be fitted to the industrial world by teaching him (sic) the team spirit.<sup>87</sup> What this diverse group had in common was the goal of 'character building' - within a morally and

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85 OHL., Patricia Fitzpatrick, who elaborated that 'we never knew why we couldn't put our arms around each other.

86 See J. Mechling. Sacred and profane play in the Boy Scouts of America. New York. Leisure Press, 1980.

87 Joseph Lee. Play in Education. New York, Macmillan, 1922.

socially landscaped domain of experience - through play activities, where children could be trained to 'play the game of life'.

As discussed in Chapter 5, techniques of such social regulation carried with it a central and strategic production, under the emergent scientific gaze, - the production of the 'normal' child. The pedagogy of normalisation was anchored in a set of scientific practices which were to transpose children's play practices and habits to a medico-behavioural model which could then be normalised. Where play theory had once been articulated for the depraved in society (the 'larrikin', the 'delinquent' and the 'street urchin'), where children's potential for criminal actions could be brought under social control, a new discourse emerged which articulated play theories for the 'deprived'. Organised control of children's recreative habits and leisure time was an extension of the reformatory work of the schools, which constituted a shift from a moral problem to a scientific one.

Teachers and parents in the 1920s and 1930s were exhorted to provide children with 'appropriate' play apparatus which becomes a feature of the modern scientific normalisation and regulation of children:

Not only is play the surest index of a child's character it is also an indication of the normality of his (sic) development and of his mental and emotional health. Every nursery teacher should continuously watch her children at play and make some record of it. She should also make as comprehensive a study as she can of play itself, for this will enable her to interpret and evaluate her observations, and give some insight into each child and the kind of help and guidance he needs. It will help her to understand when and how to come forward and when to leave him alone. It will also guide her in her choice of the materials and playthings most helpful for each particular phase of growth.<sup>88</sup>

Not only kindergarten teachers were to individuate these new norms, but all teachers:

#### OBLIGATION TO KEEP YOUNG

The great advantage of the teachers' calling is that they are under a solemn obligation to keep young. Other people may grow old and dull and stupid, may slide into grooves of humdrum comforts and coddle themselves into invalidism. The teacher of the young must keep young. Like the General Headquarters Staff, he is a professional optimist. It is well for him if he can retain a little spark of his early impetuosity, when, perhaps like Robert

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88 L de Lissa. Life in the Nursery School. London, 1939, p.191.

Louis Stevenson, he too, dreamed of being a pirate or a leader of regular horse.<sup>89</sup>

The fiction of the teacher as friend and fellow game player, whether articulated by Stow or by the Right Honourable Fisher, serves to underscore the transformation of power/knowledge relations in both schools and playground sites of this era. Hierarchical power structures are to be denied, oppression and pain are to be obviated by 'love' and 'supervised freedom'. The reconstruction of the playground practices of the young would 'liberate' the child and enable him or her to take her place in a rationally organised and controlled world.

By the 1930s , many rural areas could make a similar claim to that of Inspector H.E. Flint, MA, Inspector of schools in the Eyre Peninsula:

The restricted playing areas prevailing in and around the City of Adelaide have no parallel on Eyre Peninsula. Here the grounds are spacious, and teachers, assisted by School Committees, have done much to improve them, and by laying down cricket pitches, making basketball and tennis courts have made adequate provision for the organised games of the children. <sup>90</sup>

Coterminous with the increase of equipment on playgrounds was the continual exhortation for increasing vigilance:

#### YARD SUPERVISION BY TEACHERS

Recently a number of accidents have occurred in school yards during play-time, and one or two of them have been of a rather serious nature, with the result that this Department has been called upon to pay medical expenses. Where it can be shown that yard supervision is adequate this Department cannot be held responsible, and there is no difficulty when claims are made. It is quite a different matter, however, when accidents happen and it transpires that no teacher is on duty at the time.

The notice of teachers is directed to Regulation XXVII, 20 and then they are asked to assist this Department by taking special care to see that there is a constant and adequate supervision of the children whilst they are on school premises.<sup>91</sup>

The encompassing, all-knowing gaze of the teacher would not only provide a perfect knowledge of all children in his or her charge, but would avoid law-suits, too.

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<sup>89</sup> SAEG, March 15th, 1923, p.91. From a speech by the Right Honourable H.A.L. Fisher.

<sup>90</sup> SAEG, February 15th, 1930, p. 112.

<sup>91</sup> SAEG, June 15th, 1932, p.156.

'Natural child development' was posited as, on the one hand, free and individualised, and on the other hand, gendered and ageist. It is hardly accidental that a discourse that argued for the separation of the High School from the Primary School (and their playgrounds) on the basis of different ages, groups, interests and capacities of the students would articulate a 'need' for the concept of 'capacity' based play practices in accord with the 'empirically' based stages of child development outlined in the discourses of an emergent, developmental child psychology.

Educational psychology can itself be read as a 'child' of the new child-centred pedagogical apparatus, drawing on existing theories of 'how the child's mind works' and new quantificational techniques, in order to codify and dispense 'attributes' and 'capacities' which became central to the norm(al) charged space of the classroom and playground. Embedded within children, were normative relations which positioned them within discursive positions where girls were 'helpful', 'unselfish' and 'nurturing' and also within cultural positions where 'only girls skipped', 'tennis was for sissys', 'girls mustn't fight', and 'boys are naturally naughty' - all 'sayings', oft repeated in oral narrative, along with many others in this vein. By the end of the 1930s a battery of criterion-referenced assessments were developed in order to evaluate the child's 'normal' development on the one hand, and her/his interpretation of play on the other, moving children's play practices into the psychoanalytic arena of a fantasy/reality double axis.

By the 1930s playing with the boys in the school playground was mythologised and considered not to be 'normal' by many girls:

**Even though you were in a class with boys there was a separation. But boys were never significant. Boys I think we found a bit frightening. Because they'd do things like pulling girls hair. Boys did nasty things to girls - that was the sort of general consensus of girls at school...They did disrupt girls' games. I can't remember if they disrupted my games. I can't remember that they were really violent. Although now and again I think we did play 'keepings off' sometimes and that would generally end in a brawl - you know, a boy falling on top of a girl or something like that. We had one ball and two teams - there would be boys against the girls.**

**We played (Red Rover) at Grade 4 and 5 (those sort of things) and again boys and girls together. But again, if a boy got the ball - everyone was frightened when a boy had the ball because**

**they could throw it so hard and it would hurt. Although boys used to play that, girls preferred to play it on their own.<sup>92</sup>**

By the end of the thirties, children's play on the school playground can be read as regulated, classified and administered, producing regulative devices which formed the 'individual' child as an object of 'child development'. But subjectivities are also constituted discursively and, as can be read from the seeming disjunction of children sharing jokes, rhymes and ribald verses under the scientific-pedagogic and psychologised gaze of the teacher, the subject positions of the 'individuals' produced are often contradictory. The possibilities for change and individual's resistance to change are forged through the development of subjectivities which are produced through contradiction and conflict, subjectivities which are not entirely accessible because of the opaque subterfuges of the unconscious.

Thus, Coralie Green recalls it as 'natural' that girls played with boys at home and in the street, but not on the school yard. Yet, she also recalls with enthusiasm that boys and girls participated in folk-dancing as part of the school curricula:

**I think the boys used to muck it up. I think the boys had to do it in Grade 4 as part of your physical education with music. We used to love the folk dancing. that used to be a class activity. We had one of those old gramophones with the wind-up record. We used to play 'Gathering Peascod' and I have never known to this day what 'Peascod' is - I still don't know. They were English folk dances. You'd have long lines, to and fro and those things. I used to love it because of the music.<sup>93</sup>**

Coralie also remembers that there was ' a great emphasis on sport for the boys' while 'we never had much in the way of equipment'. In talking about the difficulties of gaining a netball court for the girls she recalls:

**...when you think about it there was a whole lot of yard in the boys' yard - there was a large amount of space there. It would have been possible for half of the boys' yard to be made into a netball court. Whereas in the girls' yard there would not have been room....**

**I can remember going into these people (in the neighbourhood) and saying, 'The school needed a place to play netball' - eventually there was a block of land across the road from the school....<sup>94</sup>**

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92 OHI., Coralie Green.

93 Ibid.

94 Ibid.

This was, '**just how it was**', according to Coralie.

Indeed, there is a 'logic' of articulation in tracing the 'genealogy' of children's play practices in the uncovered schoolroom. It is not simply provided in Coralie's assessment that it was '**just how it was**' as this denies the construction of pedagogies of 'the natural', but that it is provided in the deconstruction of the forms of investigation and administration which composed the sphere of 'the social', on the playground, as a domain of regulated interventions in the life of the population. As outlined in the preceding chapter, it was as an instrumentality of the 'moral' sphere that the popular school first emerged, and, later, as an instrumentality of the social sphere that the modern school developed, governed by the aim of transforming the cultural physiognomies of whole populations through the forms in which individuals internalise 'social' norms as conscience and as sensibility.

The purpose-built space of the school playground, and its attendant apparatus, with its much vaunted horticultural emblems of 'gardens', 'flowers', and 'seeds' formed a critical site of intervention in the reformulation and reshaping of the attitudes of whole populations.

While the narratives of 'normalised', gendered and aged play on the school playground site provide a window into the world of children's play rituals, games and practices, and their attendant power structures, they also provide insight into the dominant shared myths of the era - that there is 'girl's play' and 'boy's play', not just on the normalised playground, but in 'real life'. It is the critical question of how one comes to know oneself, as a boy, or as a girl, that I now wish to explore.

## **SECTION FOUR : RECONCEPTUALISING 'REALITIES'**

## CHAPTER SEVEN : BOYS WHISTLE AND GIRLS SING

Grandmother said, when I asked her why  
Girls couldn't whistle the same as I,  
"Son, you know it's a natural thing,  
Boys just whistle and girls just sing."<sup>1</sup>

Anon.

A universal assumption is that, as human beings, we are either 'male' or 'female'. If one is unsure, at first sight, it is assumed that the puzzle is solved by 'checking out' the biological 'bits and pieces' of the individual concerned. The possession of a 'body' is taken as a given, for those of us who are not categorised as suffering from some form of psychosis.<sup>2</sup> Identifying who is 'man' and who is 'woman' is not, on the surface, a problematic question.

In Simone de Beauvoir's now classic question, 'Are there women really?' she questioned the 'naturalness' of 'women'. She asserted that 'One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman ... this creature, intermediate between male and eunuch'.<sup>3</sup> What is important in this assertion is that 'woman', as 'sign' and as 'subject', and 'man', as 'sign' and as 'subject', are the effects of a production, caught in the mutually constitutive web of social practices, discourses and subjectivity. The 'reality' of such categorisation and constitution is the tissue of social relations and linguistic structures through which individuals constitute themselves as 'man'/'woman'; 'boy'/'girl', and/or 'male'/'female'. Children learn to 'take up' their 'maleness' or 'femaleness' through learning the discursive practices in which all people are positioned as either 'male' or 'female'. Yet, male/female dualism is posited as an individuating element of one's 'personal' and 'social' self; humanisms' all pervading narrative of phallocentrism.

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<sup>1</sup> Cited in Boys Whistle Girls Sing. Sexism in Children's Books. Compiled by Edna Wignell. Melbourne, Primary Education Publishing Ltd., 1976. Preface.

<sup>2</sup> See Oliver Sacks, The Man Who Mistook His Wife For A Hat. London, Picador, 1985.

<sup>3</sup> Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex. H.M. Parshley (trans.) First Published 1949. London, Johnathon Cape, 1953 pp. 13 and 273.



The critical aspect of de Beauvoir's question, 'Are there women really?', for this section of the thesis, is not to debate an answer in the positive or negative, but to postulate the how of becoming male, of becoming female. Through oral narrative, this chapter attempts to trace the ways in which 'boys' and 'girls' come to know themselves; how the self is constituted and re-constituted through a variety of discursive practices and how individuals develop subjectivities which are both in concert with, and in opposition to, the ways in which others choose to position them.

As I detailed in Chapter One of the thesis, individuals 'take up' multiple subject positionings' which are frequently contradictory. A unitary self is a humanistic myth which serves to conceal the power of discursive practices and attendant apparatus, and further attempts to disguise male/female dualism, as inevitable. The condition of possibility to 'take up' and choose and change one's positioning is denied in the humanistic myth:

Humanistic discourse presuppose an essence at the heart of the individual which is unique, fixed and coherent and which makes her what she is. The nature of this essence varies between different forms of humanist discourse. It maybe the unified rational consciousness of liberal-political philosophy, the essence of womanhood at the heart of much radical-feminist discourse or the true human nature, alienated by capitalism, which is the focus of humanist Marxism. Against this irreducible humanist essence of subjectivity, post-structuralism proposes a subjectivity which is precarious, contradictory and in process, constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we speak.<sup>4</sup>

As this chapter will argue, there is a need to shift the focus away from individual 'identity' to relations of power and to the multiple subjectivities that are available to any one person within the discursive practices of society at any given historical time.

#### Towards a theory of becoming 'male' or 'female'.

Before I focus on individual narrative, to explicate forms of becoming 'male' or 'female', I wish to explore a theme I introduced in Chapter One of this thesis - the nexus of language, power, knowledge, and subjectivity. In particular, I want to focus on the materiality

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<sup>4</sup> Christine Weedon, Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory. Oxford, Blackwell, 1987, p. 33. Emphasis in original.

of language and some of the ways it 'defines' an individual's possibilities and limitations, and 'constitutes' subjectivities. For children, constituted as other to adults, learn about the 'world' of adults through its embeddedness in the language, as well as in the discursive practices and the social and narrative structures through which they are constituted as an 'individual', 'male' or 'female' 'child'. Children learn to understand, to know, and to see, in terms of the multiple positionings and forms of discourses that are available to them, for they are always embedded in networks of power relations, that is, relations with other bodies. What then is a 'body'? Can a 'body' be conceived independently of the kinds of relation it has with the world external to it?

Deleuze and Guattari suggest:

We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are, how they can or can not enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body, either to destroy that body or be destroyed by it, either to exchange actions and passions with it or to join with it in composing a more powerful body.<sup>5</sup>

Deleuze has posited that the character of the forces which may constitute 'a body' remain undetermined - there may be physical, cultural, or even aural forces - 'A body can be anything; it can be an animal, a body of sounds, a mind or an idea; it can be a linguistic corpus, a social body, a collectivity'.<sup>6</sup> The notion of body/bodies is inseparable from the notion of specific kinds of power. Learning the forms of power (and of powerlessness) and the forms of desire that are embedded in, and made possible by, the various discursive practices through which bodies position themselves and are positioned, is a process within which all children are intricately.

With the beginnings of language and the child's insertion into discursive relations, 'subjectivity' emerges; a gendered subjectivity produced through power-knowledge relations. Adoption/adaptation involved in 'taking up' gendered positions in discourses, which confer

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<sup>5</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus : Capitalism and Schizophrenia, 1980. Brian Massumi (trans.) Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1987, p. 257.

<sup>6</sup> Gilles Deleuze, Spinoza: Practical Philosophy 1970. Robert Hurley (trans.) San Francisco, City Light Books, 1988, p. 127.

power and are supportive of one's sense of continuity are suffused with emotional commitment (what Hollway terms 'investment')<sup>7</sup> in the confirmation and re-confirmation of oneself as 'masculine' or 'feminine', in accordance with frames of reference which are themselves socially produced. The 'desire' to be 'male' or 'female' is also a production, a construction. In citing the works of Foucault and Donzelot, in previous chapters, to explicate the particular interventions of various discourses and technologies of power/knowledge into the 'home' site, the 'street' site, the 'school' site and so forth, I have attempted to show the historical specificity of such discourses surrounding the prescriptions of 'normalisation'. Through oral narratives I have also attempted to show that individuals are able to choose to reject or stand outside of such norms - whether they be images of a 'fit mother', a 'good student' or a 'dutiful daughter'. What Adams has called 'the intransigence of desires' highlights the need to articulate a theory of a conjunction between the historical specificity of psychic processes and the forms and possibilities of change in personal life - that is, the links between the psychic life of individuals and the social/cultural domain.<sup>8</sup>

The psychic organising of the self through fantasy and desire derives from the imaginary placement of oneself as 'male' or 'female' within the narrative structures as well as through one's experience of the subject positionings made available in interactions with others. Interactions and interpellations imbricate the imagined self and the (re) positioned self. The achievement of normalised 'sexuality' is that it renders as inconceivable any alternatives to the male/female bi-polar social structure. As Foucault, Derrida and Lacan posit, the speaking subject inherits the burden of a speaking position incarnated in history.

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7 Wendy Hollway, 'Gender difference and the production of subjectivity' in Julian Henriques et al. (eds), Changing the Subject : Psychology, Social Regulation and Subjectivity. London, Methuen, 1984, pp.227-263.

8 See Parveen Adams 'Family Affairs', in *m/f* 1982, no. 7, pp. 3-14; Nancy Chodorow, The Reproduction of Mothering : Psychoanalysis and Sociology of Gender. University of California Press, 1978; Juliet Mitchell Psychoanalysis and Feminism. London. Allen Lane, 1974, and Sherry Turkle Psycho-analytic Politics. London, Burnett Books, 1979, for a discussion of links between the psychic life of individuals and the socio-cultural domain.

How then, is biologism and essentialism to be deconstructed from the dualisms of 'male'/'female', 'sex'/'gender', and 'real'/'representation'? One of the first steps is to understand the centrality of language for/in our lives. As Weedon has suggested, language offers a range of ways of interpreting our lives: 'In the process of interacting with the world, we give meaning to things by learning the linguistic processes of thought and speech, drawing on the ways of understanding the world to which we have access.'<sup>9</sup> Such psychological, linguistic and socio-cultural interaction disrupts the notion that 'reality' is an immutable absolute given, that there exists in society a particular vraisemblable, that is, a 'natural' generally received/accepted picture of what may be regarded as the 'Reality' of a society.<sup>10</sup> It also disrupts the notion of mimesis, that language merely mimics 'reality'. Words like 'I', 'here', 'now' and so forth, depend entirely on their context for their meaning, attention has to be paid to the moment of enunciation, to the specific production of an utterance and not just its formal, abstract character. 'Speaking materialities' refers not only to the positions from which one speaks but the way one is spoken in such positions. This allows the possibility of different speaking materialities from which different and conflicting 'truths' emerge.

The process of the 'I' in history, its ascription and inscription, has absorbed a plethora of historians, linguists, psycho-linguists, socio-linguists, psychologists, psychotherapists, psychohistorians, philosophers and so forth for decades. It is beyond the scope of the thesis to trace such a genealogy but I do wish to focus, briefly, on Lacan's re-reading of Freud, and Derrida's notion of 'difference' - which he termed 'différance'.

It is particularly essential for historians of all hues to be cognisant of the inter-relatedness of memory, language and materialism. Too often, as Lacan's work has signposted, this dialectic is elided from accounts which purport to re-present 'historical' and/or 'social' 'reality'. Negotiated meanings are produced and re-produced in the psycho/social-familial

<sup>9</sup> Christine Weedon, Feminist Practice, p. 85.

<sup>10</sup> Stephen Heath describes the function of vraisemblable as a form of naturalisation of 'reality', where it remains unknown as a form, as a construct, in that it renders 'reality' as unproblematic. See Stephen Heath 'Touch of Evil' in Screen, Vol. 16, nos. 1 & 2, Spring and Summer, 1975. My interpretation.

construction of the subject. Such a premise obviously undermines the notion of a unified and consistent subject. This calls for a closer analysis of the productivity and differentiation of meaning-making, as well as a less myopic view of culture. The 'workings' of the unconscious thus become critical to any reading of the self. Such a consideration leads to a demystification of the complex and imprecise realm of be-ing. 'The self' can be analysed as a socially-constituted process which plays a material role in society. The investments we make in our lives, our register of desires, dreams and beliefs are calibrated and re-calibrated, and made accessible to us, through 'language'. It is in this spirit of critique, of the subject-in-process, that Lacan's work should be re-considered.

Jacques Lacan's approach to psychoanalysis was posited as an attempt to deconstruct the notion of the unitary subject as a myth, to insert, in its place, an account of subjectivity which is fundamentally decentred from consciousness. Not surprisingly, such a notion has been analysed for its implications regarding 'sexual identity'. Juliet Mitchell wrote that:

the analysand's unconscious reveals a fragmented subject of shifting and uncertain sexual identity. To be human is to be subjected to a law which decentres and divides: sexuality is created in a division, the subject is split: but an ideological world conceals this from the conscious subject who is supposed to feel whole and certain of a sexual identity. Psychoanalysis should aim at a deconstruction of this concealment and at a reconstruction of the subject's constructions in all its splits.<sup>11</sup>

Lacan, building on Ferdinand de Saussure's work on 'signs' and signifying practices, located much of Freud's discoveries of 'the unconscious' and his work on dreams within the same register as the linguistic practices and signifying processes of de Saussure's formulations.

In Écrits, Lacan posited that what Freud anticipated in his work on dreams, which begins the 'royal road to the unconscious', are the formulae of de Saussure:

... necessary to any articulation of analytic phenomena (is) the notion of the signifier, as opposed to that of the signified, in modern linguistic analysis. Freud could not take into account this notion which post dates him, but I would claim that Freud's discovery stands out precisely because, although it sets out from a domain in which one could not expect to recognise its reign, it could not

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<sup>11</sup> Juliet Mitchell in Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose, Jacques Lacan and the École Freudienne : Feminine Sexuality. London, Macmillan, 1982, p. 26.

fail to anticipate its formulas (sic). Conversely, it is Freud's discovery that gives to the signifier/signified division the full extent of its implications: namely, that the signifier has an active function in determining certain effects in which the signifiable appears as submitting to its mark by becoming through that passion the signified.<sup>12</sup>

It is precisely this connection, between semiotics (the science of signs and meanings) and the passions of the unconscious, which underpins the critical notion in this thesis of how one becomes aware of oneself, conscious of oneself within the terms set by pre-existing social relations and cultural laws. Lacan was restressing the distinction, accorded by Freud, in The Interpretation of Dreams, (1900) between 'needs' and 'wishes' and 'desires'. This notion of ideational representatives, signs or memories, which can become attached to words, thus find physical expression. For both Freud and Lacan, it is 'language' which makes it possible to read dreams.

Distortion was recognised by Freud to be the 'general pre-condition for the function of dreams'.<sup>13</sup> According to him, it is the overall effect of the dream-work by which latent thoughts are transformed into their manifest form, which is not immediately or easily recognisable. Lacan identified this as the same 'tendency' as that described by de Saussure as the constant sliding of the signified under the signifier. Such twin central modes of the functioning of the unconscious processes are condensation and displacement. Condensation is the process which 'explains' why dreams are brief, meagre and laconic in comparison with the range and wealth of dream-thoughts (that is, a written explanation of a dream, in recollection, might take-up half a page, whereas its analysis might produce an inexhaustible amount of associations, a fascinating parallel with memorisation processes). Displacement is the process by which the original emphasis of an idea is detached and passed on to other ideas, a 'veering off of meaning'.

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<sup>12</sup> Jacques Lacan, Écrits. Editions du Seuil, Paris: 1966, p. 688. Cited in Rosalind Coward and John Ellis, Language And Materialism : Developments in Semiology and the Theory of the Subject. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977, p. 96.

<sup>13</sup> Lacan, Écrits. p. 511. For Freud, there is no fixed original meaning of a dream, just the dream-text with its distortion and production, that is, the dream-work.

Borrowing from Jakobson, Lacan posited signifying functions within the two poles of 'metaphor' and 'metonymy'.<sup>14</sup> Metonymy, with its word-to-word movement, (for example, 'thirty sails' can be read as 'thirty boats') was postulated as the same process as that of displacement. Metaphor retains a hidden signifier when one signifier takes the place of another. This is achieved because the hidden signifier has a metonymic relation to the signifying chain. According to Lacan, this process is equivalent to that of condensation, with the same superimposition of signifiers. Metonymy applied to the diachronic aspects, relations of contiguity, or the successive, linearly progressive, relationships between signs whereas metaphor applied to synchronic relations, relationships or substitutions based on similarity, or to vertical aspects of the linguistic code. For Lacan, this was the regulatory linkage between the construction of the ego and the subject constructed in language.

In Lacan, this construction is a complex matter as it involves notions of the 'splitting', or separation, of the 'subject' - first, from 'its' sense of continuum with the mother's body; and, then, with the illusory identity and totality of the ideal ego of the mirror stage; and, finally, a separation by which the subject finds 'itself' a place in symbolisation. According to Lacan, it is this construction which creates the subject and the unconscious, and involves imaginary and symbolic relations. Such a process occurs from the moment of a child's birth, at which point the child is described by Lacan as 'like a *hommelette* - a little man (sic) and also like a broken egg spreading without any hindrance in all directions'.<sup>15</sup> Yet the world this 'hommelette' inhabits is always/already submitted to the division of matter and societal constraints, therefore 'his' or 'her' drives are limited and contained in what is known as

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<sup>14</sup> Jakobson was the first to insist on these processes as the essential modes of functioning of language and he categorised certain artistic practices in which one or the other predominate - for example, to the metaphoric order belong the Russian lyrical songs, the works of Romanticism and of Symbolism, Surrealist paintings and the films of Charlie Chaplin, whereas to the metonymic order belong the heroic epics, the narratives of the Realist school... and so forth. See Roland Barthes Elements of Semiology, London. Jonathon Cape 1967, p. 60., for further elaboration of Jakobson's examples. Also see R. Jakobson Selected Writings. The Hague, Mouton, 1962; and R. Jakobson and M. Halle Fundamentals of Language. The Hague, Mouton, 1956.

<sup>15</sup> Lacan, Écrits, p. 816.

'erotogenic zones'. As Lacan posits them, these are 'cuts' or 'gapings' inscribed on a surface, for example, the lips or the anus. It is this cut or aperture on the surface of the body which allows the sense of 'edges', borders or margins, which differentiate the body from the organic functions associated with these apertures, thus marking out that part of the body as an area of excitation. Because these cuts or apertures are inscribed on the very surface of the subject, they have no outside that they represent; it is this which enables them 'to be the "stuff" or rather the lining ... of the very subject that one takes to be the subject of consciousness'.<sup>16</sup> This 'stuff', then, is from where, and of which, the conscious subject is constructed, in relation to the division of matter of the subject's own body to the 'heterogeneous' 'outside'.

Borrowing from Freud, Lacan postulated that the identities of 'subject' and its object emerge in the operation which differentiates the subject from its surface and equates it with their difference. It is the 'same' process which establishes the child as separate from the mother's body, thus establishing an 'outside' for the subject. What is significant, for Lacan, in this context, is the process by which the child, in tracing connections and differences in matter and in attributing to them states of pleasure and unpleasure, begins to construct a differentiated universe of objects, and 'itself' as different from these objects, thus establishing the possibility of signification. Within this process, Lacan privileged the acquisition of language as the inter-relating 'link' between the operations of the pleasure principle and the acquisition of symbolicity.<sup>17</sup> He appropriated Freud's Fort/Da game to outline that conscious subjectivity is produced via the central process of language acquisition.

Freud elaborated the Fort/Da game in Beyond the Pleasure Principle, where he observed an eighteen month old male child continuously throwing a toy from his cot and repeating 'Fort' ('there it goes'), and 'Da' ('here it is') when it was returned to him. What intrigued Freud, according to his writings, was the infant's apparently obsessive repetition of presence and absence, through his toy throwing. In the repetitive utterances, Freud deduced

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 818.

<sup>17</sup> See Jacques Lacan 'Language of the Self' reprinted in Écrits.



the child's attempts firstly to master his abandonment by his source of satisfaction, his mother, and secondly, to employ the beginnings of symbolisation. Through language the child transforms his relation to the object of his desire, and, simultaneously, to himself.<sup>18</sup> Lacan reworked the separation/autonomy duality to posit that it is only when children resolve problems associated with the desire for the mother or father, by identifying with the 'same-sexed' parent (that is, the resolution of the Oedipus Complex) that children are able to communicate within the same terms of reference as adults. According to Lacan, such a resolution allows children, simultaneously, to take alternative positions and become aware of themselves as distinct entities. The I/You dialectic, for Lacan, is the epicentre of conscious subjectivity, thereby providing a site from which 'ordered thought' can emit.

In his article, 'The Mirror Phase', Lacan described an infant's behaviour in front of a mirror as 'identification, ... a transformation which takes place in the subject when he assumes an image'.<sup>19</sup> The identification of the image in the mirror is the first moment in which the infant comes to form an image of 'itself'. Lacan describes this as the moment when the infant is forced to situate an identity in separation. This conceptualising 'in', 'of' and 'out of' the body is what Kristeva refers to as 'The position of the imagined 'I' which introduces the position of the object, itself separated and signifiable'.<sup>20</sup> This threshold of position opens the way to language acquisition, construction and re-construction, and allows the notions of the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real, which all intersect in the subject. It is, subsequently, the construction of desire which forces the transition from the imaginary to the symbol. Desidero (I desire) is, according to Lacan, the Freudian Cogito - desire of the Other.

While there remain many problems with a phallogentric Lacanian theory, per se, and its problematic with cultural universals (after Lévi-Strauss), if one wishes to trace a theory

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18 See Lacan, 'Subversion of the Subject'. Écrits.

19 Jacques Lacan, 'The Mirror Phase' in New Left Review, 1978, no. 51, p. 71.

20 Julie Kristeva, La Révolution du langage poétique. Paris. Seuil. 1974, p. 44. Cited in Toril Moi (ed) The Kristeva Reader. Oxford, Blackwell, 1986.

of becoming 'male' or 'female' one cannot ignore that Lacan's work proposes a way of understanding language and discourse which 'denies every vestige of the notion of the 'wholeness' of identity and consciousness'.

... man (sic) can never be the "total personality" while ever the play of displacement and condensation in which he is doomed in the exercise of his functions, marks his role as subject to the signifier.<sup>21</sup>

Despite the somewhat pessimistic tone of his 'theorising', relating to 'unfulfillable desires', it is his rupturing of the humanist myth of a unified self that is his major contribution towards understanding the processes of ascribing and inscribing 'male/'female' bodies and their positioning within discursive practices.<sup>22</sup>

Jacques Derrida, like Lacan, also was influenced by de Saussure's work on signifying practices and the speaking subject. 'The phone (in linguistics this is the basic speech act/acoustic image - that is, sound) is the signifying substance that gives itself to consciousness as the most intimately linked to the thought of the signified concept'.<sup>23</sup> From Derrida's perspective, the voice is viewed as the presence of consciousness itself, that is, the intention of meaning:

When I speak, I am conscious of not only of being present at what I am thinking but also of keeping close to my thought or to the 'concept', a signifier ... which I know as soon as I emit it, which seems to depend on my pure and free spontaneity, not to require the use of any instrument, any accessory, or any force taken from the world. Not only do signifier and signified seem to write, but in the confusion the signifier seems to be erased or to become transparent so as to let the concept present itself, just as it is, referring to nothing but its own self-presence.<sup>24</sup>

Unlike Lacan, Derrida's work is of interest to this thesis because of his assertion that a philosophy of language based on such a notion of the sign is 'profoundly theological'. According

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21 Lacan, Écrits. p. 528.

22 For a critique of the works of Jacques Lacan see Julian Henriques et. al. Changing the Subject: Psychology, social regulation and Subjectivity.

23 Jacques Derrida, Positions. Paris, Editions de Minuit 1972 (trans.). Alan Bass, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1972., p. 32.

24 *Ibid.*, pp. 32-3.

to Derrida, 'sign and deity have the same time and place of birth ... the epoch of the sign is essentially theological'.<sup>25</sup> Western culture has been dominated by this metaphysical tendency since Plato contributed the dualities of 'body'/'soul', 'mind'/'body', 'matter'/'idea' and so forth. Indeed, semiology is imbued with concepts and presuppositions which 'can be located very precisely from Plato to Husserl, passing through Aristotle, Rousseau, Hegel etc.'<sup>26</sup>

For Derrida, then, the 'science' of semiotics only served to reaffirm the presence of all idealist thought - identity, presence and the unity of the thinking subject. It was not possible simply to reject such notions as 'concept' or 'signified', according to Derrida, rather what is needed is to 'shake up' the tradition of which they are a part. Metaphysical myths, too, need deconstructing.

Derrida posited that the sign 'is the kernel element of our culture'. He extended the ideas of Ferdinand de Saussure by proposing the idea of language as a series of differences. Derrida privileged writing (*écriture*) in the establishment of differences by which all language including speech, function. The central terms in his theory are 'trace' or 'gramme' which are both structure and movement. 'Language is the systematic game of differences, of traces of differences, of spacing by which the elements enter into relation with another'.<sup>27</sup> He termed this notion of difference 'différance'; by changing the last syllable to 'once' from 'hence' Derrida intended to include the action of differing (*differant*), to show how all signs (in this case the written word, writing) include traces of other signs. The notion of spacing is highlighted, the temporal constitution by which generation and transformation of language are achieved. Within this spacing, the 'I', 'me', 'he', 'she', and so forth, is predicated. Language is possible because the speaker/writer sets him/herself up as a 'subject' by referring to him/herself and the 'I' of the discourse. 'I' posits another person, the one who, being

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25 Ibid., p. 25.

26 Ibid., p.26.

27 Jacques Derrida, De la Grammatologie, Paris Editions de Minuit 1967. English Title, Of Grammatology (trans.) Gayatri Spivak. Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1976, p.25.

'exterior' to 'me' becomes my echo to when I say 'you' and who says 'you' to me. The realms of the symbolic and the material, in language, can be articulated as a dialectic of signification. The subject, then, never is, the subject is always in a state of becoming. Derrida argues further that the signature provides to the written text a sense of presence, of intention, of autonomy, of what remains the very absence of the 'author' or of his/her control over the texts and its effects.<sup>28</sup>

This ex-centring of the subject ruptures the mythical unity of consciousness, of subjective and metaphysical unity. As such, it also disrupts the 'male'/'female' dualism. This most certainly does not imply that Derrida envisaged that everyone would be the same, but has allowed the possibilities of multiple kinds of 'persons' each with many possible ways of being. Derrida argues for a transcendence of dualities and to focus on the production of multiple selves through differential relations. Différance, then, can be understood as the condition of possibility, the spacing, in which men and women's bodies are inscribed, that is embodied.

Both Lacan's and Derrida's deconstruction of the unified self, that is, of the unified subject in its self-presence, allied to Freud's descriptions of the unconscious, revealing that the 'subject', in the movement of projection, is articulated as a subject in process, shows how the mythical unity and self-presence of the subject is dissolved in practical activity. These insights are critical for an elaboration of the concept of practice, because it allows for a materialist understanding of 'history' and 'practice' which is not circuited in idealism. Kristeva has cogently posited that:

The moment of practice puts the subject in relation to, and so in a position of negation of, objects and other subjects in the social milieu, with which it enters into antagonistic or non-antagonistic contradiction. Although it is situated outside the subject, the contradiction within social relations ex-centres the subject, suspends it, and articulates it as a place of transit where opposing tendencies struggle, drives whose movement of 'resistance' and theses (the 'representamen') are caught up as much in the affective (familial and loving) relations as in class struggle.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> See, Jacques Derrida, Margins of Philosophy. Paris. Editions de Minuit 1972 (trans.) Alan Bass. Chicago, University of Chicago Press 1982.

<sup>29</sup> Kristeva, La Révolution du langage poétique in Moi, The Kristeva Reader., pp. 179-80. My italics.

Practice, then, contains as its fundamental moment, the heterogeneous contradiction which places a 'male' or a 'female' 'subject' put into process by a 'social' or 'natural' 'exteriority' that is not yet symbolised, into active struggle with systems of representation'. Practice articulates the socio-historical and linguistic constraints in which these processes are structured, and postulates that the concept of 'différance' can rupture the desire of the dream to capture and contain difference, in a monument to a mythologised unity. If practice and positions are themselves historically specific, the power of their 'naturalism' can be deconstructed and reconstructed.

Normalisation of the 'male' or 'female' 'subject' is to be read in this register, as a practice of discourses and power/knowledge relations which are essentialised, which are mythologised and allow the coherence of fantasy, fact and fiction. Children must learn the dominant linguistic forms of the society into which they are born. They must learn to think with and act in terms of these known forms if they are to constitute themselves as individuals in relation to others in the social world. This 'learning' transcends mechanistic communication, for it is in the acquisition of, and learning through, the language that children learn to constitute themselves and others as 'unitary beings', as 'rational beings' capable of coherent thought, as gendered, and as individuals who are always/already in relations, of particular kinds, to others.

As well as defining individuals' possibilities, language can serve to define limitations. the material existence of language constitutes subjectivities. Children are required by adults to learn 'the obvious', the everyday 'commonsense' of 'the known' in their society. Part of this learning is the 'obviousness' of being either male or female, the one or the other. Within the play of children, be it adult supervised or child organised, language and linguistic symbolic forms only partly shape children's world. Magic, myths and fantasies embedded in the moral order, also provide possibility and constraint. Within the fantasies of play, children invest the 'real' world with constructs of fairy tales. Through the narrative structures of their fantasy world children locate themselves within their own lived gendered narratives. Play provides a fantasy vehicle for children which relates to existing social and psychic struggle.

Simultaneously, there is the play of fantasy and the fantasy of play in the worlds of children, which provides children with multiple possibilities and multiple constraints. Within this ever-present tension, children, through their play, seek to 'order' their everyday world. The play of children can render them at once powerful or powerless, participant or spectator, speaking or silent. Children's play practices move individuals through shifting and contradictory positions of power and desire which are historically constructed. Walkerdine, in 'On the regulation of speaking and silence...', wrote:

There is, in this account, no lone individual, no single point of causality, but subjects created in multiple causality, shifting, at relay points of dynamic intersection. We can take apart the facts of complementarity, of male and female, rational and irrational, active and passive, mental and manual, which form the sites and possibility of our subjugation and of our resistance. We might then adopt a double strategy, one which recognises and examines the effects of normative models, whilst producing the possibility of other accounts and other sites for identification ... a working through an exploration of both our own formation in all its historical specificity and the formation of other possibilities of practice, as well as locations from which to struggle within existing ones.<sup>30</sup>

It is in the conception of multiple kinds of persons, each with many possible ways of beings, that I posit the following re-constructed memories of becoming a boy or becoming a girl.

#### Whistling or Singing?

Becoming a 'girl' or a 'boy' is not just a conceptual process, it is a physical process, also. Every child's body takes on the 'knowledge' of 'male'/'female', 'masculinity'/'femininity' through practice(s). The process of bodily ascription works from the 'idea' to the 'real'; thus constructing constraints in who can whistle and who can sing. One's sex is thus inscribed in one's body through the activities associated with one's described sex, that is, of learning to see oneself primarily as the object of another's gaze and learning the emotions attendant on these positionings.

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<sup>30</sup> Valerie Walkerdine 'On the regulation of speaking and silence: subjectivity, class and gender in contemporary schooling'; in Carolyn Steedman, Cathy Urwin and Valerie Walkerdine (eds.) Language, Gender and Childhood. History Workshop Series. London, Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1985, pp. 238-239.

Family stories can give a feeling of continuity, of how the past led to the present, how family tradition is centred, and so help make sense of complex and contradictory life in the present. The mythologising elements of family stories can, however, be a source of containment. When I asked the interviewees a series of questions, such as, 'What sort of values did your parents want you to have?' and followed this up with 'What kind of person do you think they wanted you to grow to be?' and cross-referenced this with such questions as 'What did you want to do when you grew up?' and 'What did you want to be when you got older?' the answers were frequently fascinating in their contradictoriness and yet had been lived out, and were still being lived out, as a unified moral ethos.

Consider the following exchanges:

Margaret: How did you feel about your mother and father?

**Molly Dutton: I think we could always talk to them about anything we wanted to.**

Margaret: You didn't feel there were favourites in the family?

**Molly: No. We used to say that my brother was spoilt because he was the only boy. I think he was forgiven a lot. He was a boy and was treated differently to the girls. And he was the youngest in the family, as well. We used to think he was spoilt and got away with a lot. He said he wasn't. He said he had a terrible time with four sisters who gave him hell.**

Later,

Margaret: What kind of person do you think your mother and father wanted you to be?

**Molly: I don't think anything. I suppose they thought we'd all marry and have families. I don't ever remember being talked to at all about that sort of thing. As far as my brother was concerned I don't think anyone expected him to do anything wonderful.**

Some minutes elapse,

Margaret: Do you think your mother or your father was the greater influence on you?

**Molly: I don't know. I think each member of the family would feel different about that. (Hesitates.) I think we would have been a bit wary about displeasing our father. (long pause.) He was a conservative man - it was not that he wasn't very attached**

**to his family, but he was a conservative man I would say. I think that's what Margaret (her sister) would think about him.**<sup>31</sup>

What is intriguing in Molly's narrative is the desire to present still, at the age of ninety one years, a picture of family life that was/is centred in togetherness, in harmony and equity. The fact that Ned, her brother, was the family favourite, is at first denied, then justified, because he had four sisters whom, he said, 'gave him hell'. The picture of a father to whom one was always free to talk is later subsumed by the memory of a conservative man, of whom one is 'a bit wary'. The depiction of a father and mother who did not want Molly to be 'anything', is immediately circumscribed by the projection that 'we'd all marry and have families'. This re-telling 'sits even more oddly' when the listener is aware that Molly opposed her father's wishes, and sustained objections, to train as a nurse at the Royal Adelaide Hospital', in her early twenties, where she was a gold medalist, that she did not marry, that she received decorations from the Australian Government for her service in the Second World War in the Northern Territory, and that she remained, until her retirement a matron at many prominent South Australian hospitals. The 'investments' that Molly has made as a member of her family would appear to go some way towards reconciling what appears on the surface to be contradictory. What has occurred is that Molly's narrative ruptures the notion of the myth of a unified life history. Instead, it can be read that it evidences that one arrives at various histories of the past just as one establishes different versions of the present.

The sense of loyalty to long-dead parents lives on in present memory. To the question, 'Whom were you closer to - your mother or your father?' many, like Paddy Baker, responded 'I **wouldn't really like to say**'.<sup>32</sup> The desire to promote the imagery of a happy childhood was promoted in the re-telling, even when, in the case of Horrie Simpson, the father was a seldom-sighted individual, or in Adelene Venables' childhood, her father, an alcoholic, 'simply disappeared'. In Adelene's narrative he was totally elided, which allowed her to remember her

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31 QHI., Molly Dutton.

32 QHI., Paddy Baker.



childhood as 'fairly good, you made the best of it'.<sup>33</sup> For Jean Sudlow, it was important to 'rationalise the question of a favourite in the family:

**Margaret:** You didn't feel they played favourites with the children?

**Jean:** No. There was no jealousy in our family at all. I think it was mum's influence really. She treated us all the same, I will say this, but I think she had a stronger feeling always towards my brother (Herbert) because he was born on her birthday. He was her birthday present and there was a very strong bond between them. But it made no difference to the rest of us really. He had a lovely disposition and he always made a lot more of mum than my other brother, and I think my other brother might have had that little feeling but he never really showed it....<sup>34</sup>

The desire to position oneself 'correctly', as a 'girl' or a 'boy', encompasses the knowledge of 'one's' place in the narrative structure of the culture. Thus, in family narrative, girls and boys learn norms of gendered behaviour, of dress, of labour, of ritual and even of desire itself. As theorised earlier in this chapter, the psychic organisation of fantasy and desire derives from the imaginary placement of the 'child' as 'male' or 'female' within a complex of narrative structures, as well as through the 'child's' experience of the subject positionings made available in inter-actions with others. Thus, Jean Sudlow actively continues to achieve and sustain her gendered identity by construing her mother's 'stronger' bond for her brother Herbert as a 'natural' outcome of his shared birthdate with his mother. By positioning herself this way, Jean re-creates and sustains that family's social order.

This is not to suggest that the interviewees were not actively involved in rupturing the process of bodily inscription. Patricia Fitzpatrick, in discussing places that she was not supposed to want to visit, recalls:

**Patricia:** I used to go to the Circus, but under great duress. (from her parents who did not wish her to attend).

**Margaret:** Why?

**Patricia:** I presume nice little girls didn't go to the circus in those days. So, I only remember going once. And that was

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33 OHI., Horrie Simpson; Adelene Venables. The 'legacies' of childhood are discussed more fully in Chapter 8, below.

34 OHI., Jean Sudlow.

**because I cried and screamed and shouted so much that my grandmother rang up (Patricia's parents lived on a farm, so she boarded in Jamestown with her grandparents) and said 'Come in and take her!' So they did.<sup>35</sup>**

Yet, even in the moment of 'victory', Patricia was in no doubt of the meaning of being a 'nice little girl'. She had already learnt how her body was to be dressed, how it was to be held and the parameters surrounding the gender she was posted as having. Consequently, her narrative includes slippages of remembrances of important occasions '**Totally dressed up in your very best, with a ribbon in your hair**' and contains frequent repetitions of '**I was a terrible tomboy.**'<sup>36</sup> The symbolic forms encoded in language and the symbolic forms of bodily inscription act as powerful signifiers of 'feminine' and 'masculine' ways of being.

The re-inforcing of hegemonic masculinity is learnt by children through constant interaction and discursive positioning. Thelma Williams recalled an incident about how she learnt to deal with 'strangers' (read 'male' stranger) unwanted attention:

**Thelma: My mother always said 'Never accept lollies from strangers or go with strangers'.**

Margaret: Did she ever explain why?

**Thelma. No. But I do remember my grandmother and my mother and myself, this must have been in the war years (WWI) - we went up to Elder Park and I walked along the Torrens there where the swans were. And there was a man there with a boat and he tried to entice me into his boat with lollies, and my mother had warned me. But apparently that was the pattern in those days. They would offer you sweets and you would say 'I must ask my mother first'. That was what I was told you must ask first.**

**I can remember scuttling back to my grandmother and saying, 'That man wanted me to go in his boat'.**

Margaret: How did they react?

**Thelma: I remember furtively looking back over my shoulder to see what happened to the man, but my mother and grandmother hurried away. There was no thought of reporting - and it would have been a wonderful opportunity to have gone up to King William Road, found a policeman.**

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35 QHI., Patricia Fitzpatrick.

36 Ibid.

**No. We hurried away. No thought of reporting. You put it behind you.<sup>37</sup>**

The social structure Thelma inherited and interactively operated within provided her with a dilemma. With her father 'away at the war', she was left in the 'protection' of her mother and grandmother. They knew how to respond to the 'man in the boat' - you ignored him, thus rendering the incident invisible. Thelma had yet to learn that 'girls' and 'women' were discursively positioned not to cope with such incidents, that action was a 'male' province. One could go to King William Road and summon a policeman, but in positioning oneself as female, the legitimate meaningful response was to 'hurry away' and 'put it behind you'. To do otherwise would have been a denial of their sexed identity within the existing social order and, in particular, a denial of their 'feminine virtue'.

What one might be as a 'male' or 'female' simultaneously circumscribed what one might do. Clear markers of sex are introduced early into a child's life. Dress and hairstyle, along with toys and games, are more than symbolic of gender difference. They are an essential part of the interactive process through which the children learn the meaning of being a 'boy' or being a 'girl'. The difficulties that could arise from not having a 'feminine' hairstyle were experienced keenly enough to form part of some interviewees' 'life history'.

Margaret: What about your hair - how did you wear your hair?

**Eileen Said: I had curls. I had plaits.**

Margaret: Who would trim your hair?

**Eileen: It just grew. I don't think I ever had mine trimmed until I had it cut, and it was like a death in the family.**

Margaret: How old were you when that happened?

**Eileen: I suppose about eighteen or nineteen. I can remember it so well. I had very thick long hair. My sister was in a terrible state for me having it done. And it wasn't that long after that she had her own done. She is always called 'Bob' - and that's how she got her name - she had such terrible hair! Most of us had curly hair, but poor old Bob had terrible strong hair that you couldn't do a thing with, not even keep ribbons on. You'd tie the ribbons on and they just used to slide off. And then she thought she'd get those combs and not even those stayed in. And in**

disgust she cut her hair off. The boys called her 'Bob' and it stayed with her.

And now - she was very sick at the beginning of last year - but her hair is lovely now, it's as wavy and silky. It's really lovely. We laugh about it now. After waiting eighty odd years and to finish up with hair like that!<sup>38</sup>

The desire to 'look like a girl' has both a material effect on a child's body, and on the psyche, such that it is powerful enough to circulate the idea and the practice of having the 'correctly positioned' hairstyle to the Conlon sisters, sixty years plus after the event.

Some girls, like Patricia Fitzpatrick, wanted to be 'better than the boys', while Kathleen McLean recalls that her sister, Laurel, wanted to be a boy:

Kathleen: She always wanted to be a boy. She was always at Mum to cut her hair. One day, when she was about six or a bit more, we were down at the beach, and mum would come down about five o'clock. Anyway, this day we were down there and Laurel went in and she came back, she was only paddling at the time. She came back and said, 'Mum, come and have a look!' Trying to drag Mum up. And Mum said, 'I am not going unless I know what I am going to see'. She (Laurel) said, 'There is a boy down there, he hasn't got any clothes on and he's got a tongue on the end of his belly? That was the first time she'd ever seen a boy (undressed). Mum said, 'How do you know it's a boy?' She said, 'Of course it's a boy, he's got short hair'. She took years to live that down as she got older.<sup>39</sup>

The effectivity of identification has to be negotiated and constructed; for Laurel the marker of sex was 'hair' and she too, could gain access to that power structure if only she could cut her hair. She had yet to come to know why her story amused the family, she was not yet 'correctly' positioned. All children must get their gender 'right' not just for themselves to be seen as 'normal' and acceptable within the terms of cultural hegemony, but all children must also get it right for the other children who are gazing at them, interpreting themselves in relation to the act and the actor, as Other.

Ribbons, plaits, having one's hair 'ragged rolled' to provide 'natural curls', and an array of hair combs were distinctive markers of sex. Pulling a girl's plaits or dipping her plaits in the ink-well was constructed as a 'natural' part of boys' 'treatment' of girls. Only

38 QHI., Eileen Said.

39 QHI., Kathleen McLean.

Coralie Green's hair was cut short and left without artifice, which was as much a statement about her mother's 'philanthropic' and political concerns during the depression as it was about bodily inscription. Girls learnt how they were to move their bodies through space and how to disport themselves. Agnes Clarke recalled that she always participated in her school's concerts. **'We'd always be dressed up. But if you were a man you weren't allowed to wear pants. Although you might be a prince, but you didn't wear pants. We didn't show what we called 'drawers' in those days'**.<sup>40</sup> Kathleen McLean remembers being sent to the headmaster with a message. **'He was six foot and big and a beard - like a giant. I was sent to him once with a message and he picked me up so I could be right near his face. And it slid my dress right up here** (gestures to her waist). **I was embarrassed and a ripple of laughter went round the class'**.<sup>41</sup> Even an unintended act of 'sexual' immodesty is censured, so well are the normative lessons learnt that girls must not reveal their bodies for the non-sanctioned gaze of others. Children are positioned as not yet being ready to have full knowledge or understanding of the socio-moral 'order'.

Showing one's bloomers, indeed playing 'doctors and nurses', was acted out only by those children who were secure that they were well away from the superintending gaze of adults and/or parents. Many, like Coralie Green, only played it once **'and didn't like it'**.<sup>42</sup> Talking about such games was difficult for many people, especially if the conversation was to be recorded. Childhood was easier to mythologise as a time of 'innocence'. It was much 'easier' to acknowledge that such 'play' went on with/by 'other children'. One had to avoid being 'caught out' in such acts, as they were not 'correct behaviour'.

It is intriguing that such reticence appears to disintegrate when adults write stories about their childhood. Not only the 'derring-do' exploits are aggrandised but the perceived

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40 QHI., Agnes Clarke.

41 QHI., Kathleen McLean.

42 QHI., Coralie Green.

loss of sexual 'innocence' frequently takes centre-stage. Even when the incidents are more amusing than erotic, the belief that the writer is, usually, a 'public figure' allows for the excursion into that more veiled part of the child's world. It is already/always assumed that all areas of the writer's life will be of interest to the public. For instance, Kym Bonython, a prominent member of the Adelaide 'gentry', wrote:

In 1925 I joined the kindergarten section of Creveen (a girl's school) in North Adelaide. I remember ... the morning roll-call. The children sat on the floor in a circle, and the teacher gently touched our foreheads with a peacock feather as she called each name. My other most vivid recollection is of the furtive 'poppy shows' behind a hedge at the back of the school. Here curious students learned the fascinating difference between boys and girls through lifted skirts and lowered trousers.<sup>43</sup>

While carefully crafted, this passage loses the immediacy and efficacy of the spoken word and while it 'verifies' that such games were a part of children's lives, it does not illuminate how these children individuated this interaction. It loses the sense of self.

Apart from Patricia Fitzpatrick, 'gender barriers' were rarely crossed in the narratives. While girls inhabited the same 'public' space as boys, whether it be sections of the playground, the streets, or in the neighbourhood, or in the more 'private' domains of the front or back yard, the narrative structures played out ensured that male/female dualities were perpetuated.

**Jean Sudlow: We played soldiers at home (during WWI). Next door they had a big yard at the back and they had like a gully and bushes and we have a trench there. And we were the nurses and the boys were soldiers. And they would come in wounded and we would have our bandages with red ink on them and bandage them up. I remember one Saturday we were all playing and one boy said, 'Let's do some potatoes'. You cooked them in coals. We were there all afternoon and we cooked these potatoes. They (the family next door) always had a hot dinner on Sunday and when they come to get the potatoes there was none left. So they got into trouble. That was during our soldier times. They had little guns made out of wood - shaped like a gun. They had a brother who was a carpenter and he had a big shed down the back.<sup>44</sup>**

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43 Kym Bonython, Ladies' Legs & Lemonade. Adelaide, Rigby Ltd., 1979, p. 3.

44 QHI., Jean Sudlow.

Jean also played tea parties with this same family next door. **'We all had our tea sets'**, by which she meant the girls next door, and not the boys, who did not participate in this play. Such practices were regarded as 'normal' by Jean and those around her.

Many women recall climbing trees as part of their fun, while others, like Adelene Venables, recall it as a surreptitious practice - **'There were trees to climb providing we didn't get caught, we would get into trouble. We weren't allowed to climb trees. Too dangerous for girls. It wasn't dangerous for boys, just girls!'**<sup>45</sup> Some, like Margaret Kenny, would remain on the periphery of the action:

**I can remember Ned (her brother) at Mitcham making parcels and putting them out on the footpath. I can remember that. Then we'd be sitting in the tree. And when someone came along he'd pull it up - it was on string. I was in the background. I can remember him doing that.**<sup>46</sup>

This active/passive dichotomy was frequently present in the narrative structure, constantly raising the query as to what is the relationship between fantasy, language and action.

It was apparent that some of the interviewees, in particular, Coralie Green and Thelma Williams, had eidetic memories. That is, they could strongly visualise past actions and as they re-told them they were able to re-live them. It was not simply a matter of slipping from the past tense to the present tense, when describing prior events, but that the action was indeed being re-lived in the present. The images conveyed from their memories, through their language (speech), provided the listener with a startling sense of being present in the past. With other interviewees, particularly Horrie Simpson, their narratives evoked a sense of fantasy, of a 'fun-filled' childhood from which all terrors had been elided. Whereas, with Adelene Venables, a strong 'sensation' permeated her narratives that if she spoke 'too freely' there was a possibility that her internal terrors might become external real events. The 'safeguard' was to 'passively' re-memorise those experiences which she had marginalised in her oral discourse - the 'disappearance' of her father early in her life, being 'fostered' to

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45 OHI., Adelene Venables.

46 OHI., Margaret Kenny.

relatives, not growing up with her mother and siblings, and so forth. It was as though Adelene believed that pain could never have been experienced in the first place if it was never consciously acknowledged. I was always acutely aware that Adelene constructed her narrative around what she chose to tell me about her childhood, around what she thought I needed to know and what I most definitely did not need to know. Being 'active' or 'passive' in the narrative is therefore problematic. It raises the query of why individuals frame themselves in this frequently contradictory way and in response to what circumstances; and, in re-constructed memory, how fantasy, language and action is individuated and 'lived out'.

Responsibility was frequently ascribed to older members of the family to contain any disruption to the 'correct', that is, normalised gender position:

Margaret: What about the older children, were they expected to keep you 'in line'?

**Coralie Green: They weren't held responsible. But they would, just because we were a family. I can remember once there was some assembly at school and my sister heard that my name was going to be read out, for a prize. So she came at recess time and (pause) the sort of spitting on the hair and brushing it all up - and heaving my pants up and pulling my dress down trying to make me respectable, and telling me, what I had to do. And "Don't forget to say "thank you"". I can definitely remember this happening when I was in Grade One.<sup>47</sup>**

Older children are co-opted in collusion with adults and other children to establish a normalised social order. Through such reflexive interaction a 'predictable' world is acted out - and upon - through which children can know and be known.

The 'domestic nature' of girls' play was the arena in which most women spent a great deal of time explaining their play practices; that of 'playing house' or 'mothers and fathers'. Even women like Coralie Green, who professed a much closer relationship with her father than her mother, and Adelene Venables, who had been fostered from the age of five years to elderly, somewhat remote relatives, would spend a great deal of time and energy polishing the skills and emotions associated with the position of 'mother'. Most women devoted a great deal of time playing 'afternoon tea', 'feeding the baby', 'bathing the baby', 'cleaning the house' and so

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47 QHI, Coralie Green.



forth. Within the 'security' of simulated domestic confines they would act out their fantasies, their hopes, wishes, desires and fears. Very rarely were boys included.

**Adelene Venables:** We always played mothers and fathers and getting married. At home and at school. We'd make peg dolls. Paint the faces on and make them clothes from scrap materials. At school, when we used to play under the trees, mothers and fathers, the trees they had down around the school, you could get in under them. That's the way the trees were trimmed. They were beautiful really. We used to imagine we were ladies and had our lady friends. We poured imaginary tea. We'd make dandelion chains for necklaces. At home we'd get some old curtains from somewhere for the veil and get married.<sup>48</sup>

Almost two decades later, and hundreds of kilometres away, Coralie Green described a similar set of 'mother' play.

**Margaret:** What were the playground facilities like at Wellington Road (school)?

**Coralie:** Mainly dirt, but there were lots of trees and we used to build houses in the roots of the tree. There were buttress roots of the tree and we were littlies - grade two or three, and we'd belt out and get our spot and then we shuffled the dirt up with our feet and make all the rooms of our house and make doors and then we'd play houses. Mainly mothers because there wouldn't be any boys in the game.

**Margaret:** So you never had anything to put in the house?

**Coralie:** No. We'd put the dirt together to make the walls. And woe betide anybody who walked into the house without going through the door! We all had our houses around this - we'd play all the recess and lunch times like that.<sup>49</sup>

For both Coralie and Adelene, for whom 'childhood' frequently presented them with an array of socio-economic problems, this mother play frame allowed them to exercise themselves as powerful. Free of the attention of 'boys', they could appropriate the behaviours of real or imagined mother figures. They could also imaginatively take up the father position if they so desired.

The males I interviewed all consigned this domestic play to the 'realms' of 'girls'. Not one actually admitted to taking part in such rituals, although many women spoke of playing

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48 OHL., Adelene Venables.

49 OHL., Coralie Green.

with their younger brothers, in this fashion. An exception was Jean Sudlow who remembered that her mother made her rag dolls, and for the boys 'made golliwogs':

**Jean: When we were little my brother and I - he used to play with me. We used to have custard power in a box and he would make a cart out of that and make cardboard wheels. He was an engineer eventually so it must have been in him to do these things. So he would make these carts and we had a wooden elephant - he'd harness that to the cart, and I had little dolls and he'd sit the dolls in there. I think that came from going up into the country with the horse and trap. He'd make a shop and we'd do shopping. We used to play a lot like that. But my younger brother, he was more for getting the hammer and the nails.<sup>50</sup>**

It is interesting to note that Jean is at pains to eliminate any notions that her brother was 'unnatural' in his playing with her. Consequently, she positions him as the dominant partner, the one who constructed the play artefacts and links this play with his later adult occupation as an engineer - **'it must have been in him to do these things'**. Although her younger brother also made billy carts and 'knocked-up' stilts and see-saws, Jean positions these constructive abilities outside of her play discourse. The idea of what it is to be 'male', means that even when shared domestic play is in operation, the boy must appear to be in control of his environment and of his 'female', less-powerful, 'partner'. Hence, Jean's brother was allocated a position of dominant power by her, and also established such a position for himself. Jean's position was complementary to, and supportive of, that power.

For some men, like Bill Burns, it was hard to recall his childhood in terms of 'masculine dominance'. He constantly reiterated **'I was a good boy, really, if I do say so myself. I never got into any trouble. I was a quiet child'** and at several points in his narrative recalled **'I was a bit of a mummy's boy, actually'**. He posited being closer to his mother than his father as **'it's only natural for a boy to be closer to his mother, isn't it?'**<sup>51</sup> William appeared to have an unquestioning acceptance of his mother's authority and could not recall ever questioning her decisions or control over him. This does

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50 OHI., Jean Sudlow.

51 OHI., William Burns.

not in any way challenge William's imbrication of his 'correct' gender, it may only highlight that he recognised as 'natural' that his mother was powerful in the 'private' domain and his father was the powerful figure in the 'public' domain. He may never have experienced the desire to rupture this ordered sense of his world. His actions do not position him outside of the dominant male hegemonic discourses, indeed they probably served to underscore his discursive *masculine positionings*.

The essentialism of the production of 'male'/'female' dualities, that is, their physical and metaphysical ascription and inscription, was to be further 'strengthened' with the emerging production of 'children's' toys. Even though very few of the men and women I interviewed had many manufactured toys, parents were increasingly exhorted, via catalogues, newspaper advertisements, and travelling salespersons to 'buy something for your little girl or boy, madam'.<sup>52</sup> As play became a central part of the school's normalising pedagogic practice, 'professionals' contributed to the discourse of 'advice literature to guide parents in the 'proper' use of play objects, that is, toys.<sup>53</sup> 'Natural' development was to flourish with the introduction of 'educative' toys. 'Passive' toys, modelled on domestic apparatus such as irons, and dolls were articulated for girls and active toys, such as aeroplanes and mechano sets, were articulated for boys. Toys were catalogued as 'having' an age and a gender in their suitability for children's use. They, too, were 'norm' referenced. Parents were encouraged to have suitable sizes of furniture for younger children and catalogues of the 1930s proudly displayed 'high-chairs' and 'play-pens'.<sup>54</sup>

Apart from the introduction of yo-yo's, which were quickly copied and home-produced, children's toys, according to oral narrative, continued to be predominantly 'home-made'. Billy carts, bows and arrows, kites, knucklebones, peg dolls, quoits, skittles, stilts, tops, and

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52 See Appendices for selected toy advertisements of the 1930s.

53 'Every piece of equipment, including the toys, is there for a purpose, psychological or didactic - as little as possible is left to chance'. Cited from Denison Deasey, Education under Six. London, Croom Helm, 1978, p.201.

54 See Appendix C, for examples of the genre.

quandong conkers, were among the hand crafted objects, whereas 'beloved objects' such as marbles continued to dominate this era. As I have previously discussed, the ball, in all its various guises, was the most utilised source of fun. Children did not conceive of a ball as a toy, rather a necessary part of their daily amusement. Many children did not receive toys for birthday presents or Christmas presents and some, like Adelene Venables, never, ever received a gift. The uncertainties of the First World War, followed by a depression, meant that many of the men and women I interviewed had recollections of few 'bought' toys. The one doll Mrs. Said received, from an elder brother, was so treasured that 'I never, ever took it out of the box. It stood on my dressing table just as I got it and it stayed like that until I got married'.<sup>55</sup>

Eileen O'Loughlin laughed when asked about toys and recollected that she always fancied a toy sewing machine. 'Mother just looked at me and said 'What a waste of money, Eileen'. Eileen had been taught to sew before she went to school and despite being too small to operate the treadle sitting down, could make petticoats, 'standing up at the age of six'.<sup>56</sup> Eileen's narrative is illuminative in that 'girls' and 'boys' were already/always positioned in a nexus of socio-cultural, linguistic and metaphysical practices and discourses which posited 'maleness' and 'femaleness' prior to the emergence of a toy industry. It is not the use of toys, per se, which constitute children as 'male' or 'female', for children are necessarily involved in positioning themselves as gendered beings. Toys are 'taken up' in a variety of ways that cross 'gender boundaries', depending on who is using what and in which context. 'Masculine' and 'feminine' ways of be-ing are not unitary, as evidenced by narratives which posited contradictory ways of playing by both males and females.<sup>57</sup> Although for many interviewees, a distinct preference for certain forms of play, in specific settings, was expressed, at no time

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55 QHI., Mrs Said.

56 QHI., Miss O'Loughlin.

57 For example, the game of marbles was described variously as 'only a boy's game', 'it was a girl's game' and 'both boys and girls played marbles'. QHI., Clarke; Venables; Said; Sladdin and Noonan.

was it suggested that they could not 'take up' other positions. What was at play in the narratives was whether or not 'boys' and 'girls' had the desire to move beyond such dualisms.

Be-ing a boy and be-ing a girl cannot be understood outside the discursive parameters of heterosexual relations which construct the norms and practices of these 'identities'. The desire to adopt such positions is enmeshed in historical specificity which is intricately in power/knowledge relations. Desire is a psychic, linguistic and socio-cultural construct which is shaped and re-shaped by sets of multiple interactive conditions. Such conditions produce, fix, and channel (and allow the possibilities of) the desire for individuals to adopt such positionings as 'the tom boy', 'the good boy', 'the helpful girl', or 'the naughty boy' et cetera. Within these positionings the way(s) children play is defined, who plays, when and what, and within these contexts contradiction and conflict occurs.

The genitalia one possesses is articulated in gendered discourses and heterosexual relations/practices which position 'girls' as other to 'boys', as well as other to adults, but the perceived lack of the phallus does not mean girls cannot or do not imaginatively re-construct themselves as active subjects and then act upon this in the material world. Although, this does not mean that such females remain blind to the knowledge that the material world places many obstacles and difficulties in their way.

Pat Fitzpatrick's narrative was evocative of one who recognised that boys were allowed a greater freedom than girls. As an 'only child', away from her parents' gaze, and that of her grandparent's gaze, with whom she boarded during the week, she rode boys' bikes and suffered the 'grazed knees and cuts' in silence, she played mainly with boys 'cricket and football in the yard and tennis on a court we'd mark out in the dirt', and she ran faster and with more determination than most boys. Yet, she did not want to be a boy, she wanted access to the male power/knowledge paradigms. She wanted to choose what she could do and what she did not want to do.

**Pat: I was always aware of boys. No doubt about that, because I liked boys' company. And to say that now sounds as though you were a real tart. But the fact that I grew up with boys, and my very closest friend was my boy cousin, I just liked boys' company. I had grown up with them. So I was always very aware of boys. I always followed the football - played it when I was**

little. Followed the athletics and did that when I was younger, too. And I loved dancing, and that was contact with boys. When I think about it and talk about it, it was circumstances. I liked to play with boys, boys' games. I had not had a lot to do with girls. Even my girl cousin used to drive me silly - because she wanted to do things that girls did, and I didn't! I was always hiding from her.

Margaret: So you were aware that there was a difference between the ways girls and boys behaved?

Pat: Very aware.

Margaret: It was important for you to play boys' games?

Pat: I enjoyed it. I was happy and enjoyed it. I never went through the stage as a little girl like little girls, you know, how they get giggly/silly. I never experienced that because I never played with them.<sup>58</sup>

Be-coming a male and be-coming a female is a complex and contradictory interrelation of ideas, practices, desires and investments. There are multiple positionings and possibilities of practices available to 'girls' and 'boys', beyond those implied in the gendered duality of whistling or singing. The voice is part of the body, as is the psyche, and the body is the centre of one's activity in the world. The body is the focus of gendered ascription and inscription. Learning to be, that is be-ing, is constituted within a nexus of meaningful relations which are socially and culturally located. One must recognise this material and psychic location in its effectivity in the re-production of difference in discourse and subjectivity, through power and signification, before one can re-construct the 'self'.

In the Introduction to this thesis, and in Chapter One, I posited the centrality of language to the re-formulations of the self. This concern with an understanding of the interplay between agency and structure has underpinned this thesis. The motif of 'play' has been deliberately adopted because it is multi-faceted. Not only is there the morphological connotation of 'frivolous activity' but there is a field of disparate praxis in which such a notion is embedded. The formal separation of the spheres of 'work' and 'play', dichotomised as serious/frivolous activity, has, as I have discussed in Section Three, been gradually re-

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58 OHL., Patricia Fitzpatrick.

formulated into designated 'time slots', in the lives of children (and adults); the structure and function of 'work' and 'play' have been allowed to grow more alike, thus 'urging' children to more effectively discharge their gendered social functions. I have argued in the earlier sections of this thesis that the construct 'play' is an historical artefact, underwritten by the culture, which illuminates that human behaviour is rooted in a complex nexus of structured needs, language, 'common sense' and critical consciousness which underpins, and allows for, the production of multiple subjectivities and perceptions of 'everyday life' and 'the world'.

Play, and its attendant disparate discourses is not to be reduced solely to the aspect of 'games', although this construct remains a critical terrain for critique and transformative action. The concept and construct of 'play' is critical in that it draws attention to the discourse of lived cultures and self-production. The inter-play of power/knowledge relations, and the consequent interconnections between structural and textual forms, are illuminated in an 'interrogation' of how individuals play, at any given historical moment. Within the notion of 'play' lays the meanings individuals give to their lives through the complex historical and political forms that they both embody and produce. A re-examination of one's play practices reveals how individuals create memories, stories and narratives which 'account' for the self - the problematic of 'who is one'.

The 'very serious business of play' is of particular import because, as I have outlined in this chapter, it deeply affects the individual at the level of needs and desires. Play, as idea and practice, not only shapes our consciousness but interpellates human needs and social relations. As both practice and experience, play imprints on the psyche - whether it be play as 'duty', as 'games', 'sport', 'rhymes', 'toys' or 'jokes'. Be-ing 'playful' and 'playing' as a form of corporeal gratification mocks the 'seriousness' of society. In mocking such 'seriousness', children's play is able to pierce the instrumental shell of social experience, and its attendant perceptions and sensibilities.

But children's play does more than mock the seriousness of everyday social life. It gives lie to the notion that the 'real' is 'rational'. The supposed 'unreality' of children's play, so often depicted as a socially harmless enclave of fantasy, a form of 'safety zone', is a field of

tension that indicts the very society it entertains. The presumed 'unreality' of children's play gives notice that 'reality' is not yet 'real'. Unconsciously, children rehearse the 'right' life, the 'normalised' life. The disclaimers by adults that children's play is 'only pretend' or 'it's only a game', serve as a reminder that there is, as Huizinger in Homo Ludens contended years ago, more here than meets the eye.<sup>59</sup>

Play, as a cultural construct, both protests society and makes possible its continued barbarism.<sup>60</sup> As a complex form of human experience play exhibits a certain attraction and a certain aversion to the society in which it resides. Such anti-thetical moments stand in interlocking tension to each other. Within the play of children there is always affirmative and negative moments which 'bounce off' against each other. The social interpretation of play necessitates a critical consideration of its special inter-relation to society, and to the state, of its internal opposition to, and complicity in, state and society. Children's play, then, is to be ultimately critically analysed as a telos of production, a potential whose resolution presupposes the pacification between the individual, the state and the society.

'Play-ing' and 'be-ing' share similitude. There is a continual interplay of the self. In re-constructing a child's play, the self is re-constructed. Within such an interplay of power relations, it is to the reformulation of 'the self', in and through successive generations, that I finally turn.

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59 Johan Huizinga, Homo Ludens : A Study of the Play Elements in Culture. Boston, Beacon Press, 1950.

60 The current plethora of video games based on 'war strategies' is a contemporary re-working of more ancient play activities.



## CHAPTER EIGHT : TRANS-GENERATIONS : THE LEGACIES

The narratives of this world are numberless.... Able to be carried by articulated language, spoken or written, fixed or moving images, gestures, and the ordered mixture of all of these substances; narrative is present in myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, mime, painting ... stained glass windows, cinema, comics, news items, conversation. Moreover, under this almost infinite diversity of forms, narrative is present in every age, in every place, in every society; it begins with the very history of mankind and there nowhere has been a people without narrative. All classes, all human groups, have their narratives, enjoyment of which is often shared by men (sic) with different, even opposing cultural backgrounds. Caring nothing for the division between good and bad literature, narrative is international, transhistorical, transcultural: it is simply there, like life itself.<sup>1</sup>

This thesis has postulated the need to recognise that becoming 'social beings' cannot be understood in 'monological' terms. Neither 'society' nor the 'state' are static forms into which the individual is progressively 'incorporated'. The unfolding of 'childhood' is not, as many historians have delineated, 'time' elapsing just for the child - it is 'time' elapsing for all with whom the child comes into contact. Dominant in the narratives of the interviewees, trans-generations, is the theme that we are all enmeshed in the continuity of interaction. An interaction that re-works and re-forms relations and practices over 'time'. Children 'create' parents as well as parents creating children. This is the heritage of all individuals - it is the successions of the generations.

Within the nexus of family patterns, cultural change and the involvement of state agencies, gender dynamics are central to an analysis of the changes to the family's emotional and psychic structure in the early decades of the twentieth century. The material context of the household was 'modernised' as technology entered the domestic arena; the size of the family decreased, which altered not only its shape but the actual familial dynamics; and state and voluntary organisations penetrated the everyday lives of familial members.

Enshrined in the Harvester 'family wage' judgement of 1907, which re-organised the economic base of the father's familial authority, were the roots of the 'modern'

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<sup>1</sup> Roland Barthes, 'Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives', in Music, Image, Text. (Trans.) Stephen Heath. New York: Basic Books. 1977, p. 9.

formation of personality in the family. The re-ordering of the mother's role, as a consequence of these economic changes, was to highlight the national necessity of her child-rearing role. Familial gendered behaviour was to be re-calibrated along grids of 'normality', superintended by 'experts' who were to attempt to establish societal consensus in everyday existence.

Women's nurturant and maternal 'capacities' were re-formed. Through their management of children, mothers were to superintend not only the physical health of their children but their psychological development as well. This was to involve familial relations in negotiated actions which made possible changes to the familial psychodynamics of 'love', 'authority' and 'personality'. The 'development' of children was to be suffused by notions of normalised practices, normalised sequences of 'growth'. Play was to be differentiated as behaviour and as performance. Both mother and child were to be 'freed' through having their 'naturally' endowed capacities augmented. The mother was to be freed to pursue her role of nurturer and keeper of the haven while the child was to be freed to develop through play. It is ironic that the concerns for the individual freedom of the 'modern' family in practice ensured that all its members were reproduced as objects of a state sponsored 'scientific' and 'normalised' gaze by means of the very mechanisms which were intended to produce their 'liberation'.

In the modern family, the father was 'free' to pursue a family wage, the mother 'free' to scientifically manage the home and the bodies within the household and the child was 'free' to be superintended in school. That this was to become a taken-for-granted 'natural' order is evident in the oral narratives. **'Of course mothers should stay home and look after the children. That's what's wrong with the world today.'**<sup>2</sup> **'It's only natural, after all. Fathers work, mothers look after the kiddies.'**<sup>3</sup> To not live out everyday life within these 'naturalised' norms was to perceive of oneself as a 'failure' - as 'abnormal'. The 'privileging' of motherhood, earlier this

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2 QHL, Elsie Wheaton.

3 QHL, Brice Wheaton.

century, severely constrained and limited the life choices of women and girls for generations to come. Yet the historical production of such practices are overtly elided in reconstructed memory. What is present in these trans-generational narratives are the traces of the shifting transformations in the production of knowledge of what the self is taken to be, and traces of the desire actively to involve oneself in the new practices which emerge.

The site of children's play has been analysed as one possible way to illuminate the taken-for-grantedness of the re-ordered 'nature' of gendered familial relations with its concomitant 'normalising' of individuals. As I have previously stated, the discourses informing these changes to practices, and the re-formulation of the self, are not all of a one piece. Meanings are negotiated and re-negotiated, re-worked and re-formed in successive generations. The state was not the only agency involved in the re-forming of children's cultural practices, and its relationship to social practice was/is always problematic. While one can demonstrably assert that state involvement in the everyday lives of people increased dramatically from the nineteenth century, intentions were not always effects. It is individual people who together render the state and its agencies operable, and this occurs in consensual and contradictory ways.

Over successive generations massive transformations of everyday life are blurred, their historical and philosophical 'roots' are elided. The production of the self - of our desire, hopes, beliefs, needs and wants - is also elided. In memory, however, the residue of these practices remain, whether they be fantasised, mythologised or acted out as a self who is enabled or delimited in the social realm.

In any, and every, genealogy of how the self constitutes itself as 'subject' there are multiple narratives. Such narratives depict the practices whereby individuals, by their own means and/or with the help of others, act on their own bodies, souls, thoughts, conduct and ways of be-ing in order to transform themselves and attain a certain state of

'perfection' or 'happiness'.<sup>4</sup> Along with others, Foucault was interested in 'the field of the historical reflection on ourselves'.<sup>5</sup> and I posit that such questions are critical in 'reading' transcribed oral narratives and understanding the process of re-memorisation.

It is within this context, and after the Kantian type notions of 'What are we in our actuality?' and 'What are we today?', that I posit such questions as critical in 'reading' oral narratives, indeed, as critical in the process of re-memorisation. It is within the process of the construction and re-construction of narrative that the genealogical methods of Foucault and the psycho-analytic techniques of Freud share similitude - a telling/theorising of the nature of the psyche; what does it mean to be? What is the true nature of the self?

In Chapter Seven, I examined the process of gender ascription and inscription for/on the body. The relation between power and the body/bodies is best understood when such a familiar dichotomy as the mind/body is deconstructed. For, as I have postulated, it is within the structuring of one's desires, beliefs and symptoms that social norms work on individual circumstances. Freud's modelling of the individual in society was not a theory of the mind, but of the psyche. Along with Foucault, Derrida and Lacan, Freud posited the notion that beliefs and desires are grounded. There are, then, different speaking materialities from which different and conflicting truth emerges. It is within narratives that one can begin to analyse a production of a total symbiotic assemblage, within which, as Foucault posited, power relations can materially penetrate the body in depth. To understand that desire is an historically-determined product is critical to/for any reading of narrative:

Desire has nothing to do with a natural or spontaneous determination; there is no desire but assembling, assembled desire. The rationality, the efficiency, of an assemblage does not exist without the passions the

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4 See Michel Foucault The History of Sexuality, Vol. 3: The Care of the Self. (Trans.) Robert Hurley. New York: Pantheon. 1986, for an elaboration of this notion, in particular, pp. 37-68.

5 See Michel Foucault 'Afterword' in Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1982, p.214.

assemblage brings into play, without the desires that constitute it as much as it constitutes them.<sup>6</sup>

Chapter Eight focuses on the narratives of the interviewees to trace the specific 'techniques' that are employed when one attempts self-knowledge, when one seeks to 'explain' one's wishes, hopes, desires and so forth. In re-constructing memories of childhood - and, in particular, play practices - all of the individuals also re-constructed fragments of a life history. Embedded in memory is the gendered acquisition of skills, beliefs and attitudes. Within this construction of the self lies the 'legacy' of what is 'passed on' to successive generations. In the retelling of their stories, human beings attempt to understand themselves, to formulate a cohesive, unitary being, and in so doing they attempt to shape others in their 'image'.

Following Foucault, all of us are imbricated in technologies of production, which permit us to produce, transform or manipulate 'things'. All of us are involved in technologies of sign systems, which permit us to use signs, meanings, symbols or signification. As well, we are all involved in technologies of power which are variously embraced in the conduct of individuals, attempting to submit them to certain ends or domination, that is, an objectivising of the subject. Ultimately, however, we are all involved in technologies of the self, which permit us to effect our own means, or, with the help of others, the means to operate on our own bodies, souls, thoughts, desires and beliefs in an effort to transform ourselves and aspire to some form of 'immortality'.<sup>7</sup> As well, all individuals are enmeshed in rites of passage which involve rituals which 'guide' individuals through the transitional moments of life, marking the disruption and difficulty of change and re-integration back into the 'ordered' life of the community.

Some of these rites of passage involve separation, a separation which places the person concerned into a state of privilege or crisis outside the norms of everyday

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<sup>6</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987, p. 399.

<sup>7</sup> See Michel Foucault 'Technologies of the Self' in Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman and Patrick H. Hutton (eds.) Technologies of the Self. Amherst, The University of Massachusetts Press. 1988, p. 18.

existence. For some of the interviewees the pain of the separation from 'the home', from 'the mother', which came about through the mechanism of compulsory schooling, was 'read' and re-told in this register. Rites of passage also involve transitional rites during which an individual is in a liminal relation to the world (a 'no-mans-land'), which may well be marked literally by a particular relationship to place. Ann Barber's sense of 'marking time' in her childhood, of being both in and out of her Spring Gully surroundings, of not quite knowing how or where to belong, spatially or temporally, is read in this register, in her narrative. Whatever the individual form of these rites, all the interviewees had their own narratives of rites of re-incorporation - whether it be Adelene Venables, who regains a more 'satisfying' childhood through the shaping of her children's childhoods, or Arthur Schubert, whose beloved Lutheran faith and German heritage, so 'assaulted' in the First World War, is recouped with his son's publication of a book, entitled Kavel's People. Within these rites the possibility of change is celebrated.

Within the structure of narrative there is a literal representation of transition, as movement through a threshold, from one space to another, and a mythic representation, where the interviewees frequently matched the 'end' of their childhoods with the 'beginning' of their children's childhoods, thus establishing a synchronic order in their narratives. Marriage, for the interviewees, represented some form of 'watershed' in the tellings of their childhood days and those of their children. It represented the symbolic transition from 'sexual innocence' to 'sexual maturity' and involved the ritual function of re-incorporation back into the 'ordered' state of society as well as heralding the individual's new status within society. Pat Fitzpatrick's narrative is told in this register. Early in my interviews I realised that although my focus was to elicit childhood experiences, this represented only one part of the telling for the interviewees. Even though I sought specific information on play practices, individuals would shape their responses via a process of re-memorisation which saw childhood as part of a ritualised passage and they would shape and re-shape its 'parameters' within a multiplicity of interactions. Thus they could, and would, talk about the games they played while simultaneously they inserted their children's activities into the narrative. To

conceptualise a topology of gendered childhood is to draw its metaphors from both space and time. One cannot, does not, simply pluck the psychic and material images, the imagery or the desires of/for childhood from some 'free floating' bank of childhood memories. For memories of 'childhood' are quite obviously constructed and re-constructed later, and are used as screens to stand in for, or mask, feelings which cannot be represented directly. Yet, within the re-constructed 'episodes' and the 'fragments' symbolically lie such 'images', of the repeated patterns of anger against, or pleasure with, parents; the pain or pleasure of 'schooling'; the fun or fear associated with childhood activities; and experiences of 'trauma' associated with the recognition of sexual difference. Through the constellation of interactions, especially at the emotional level, between family members, friends and the superintending gaze of others, the self is constituted and re-constituted. Sentiments, like desires, have histories.

Where the social and psycho-analytic overlap, myth flourishes at the conjunction. The stories and images we fashion, to appease our anxieties and/or fan our fascinations, also serve to contain us - to organise a world free of contradiction. Myth helps us to organise the complexity of human acts. Semiotic is not an alternative to materialism, it is grounded in materialism. Vladimir Propp's analysis of narrative structure in the folk tale, also emphasised the need to contain the chaotic experiences of life and history.<sup>8</sup> The folk tale, as narrative, can tell the story of a transitional phase in which social and/or economic change needs to be given the ideological force of order and be integrated into a new expectation of everyday normality. The abnormal must always be re-incorporated back into 'order'. Pleasure, then, becomes a serious matter in the context of innovative change.<sup>9</sup> For the interviewees to make 'sense' of their childhood it had to be re-

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<sup>8</sup> Vladimir Propp's seminal Morphology of the Folktale was written, in Russian, in 1928. However, it was only translated into English, in 1968. It is an excellent exploration of the linguistically specific and the culturally-determined - those who perceive, define, control and educate children could find much to investigate.

<sup>9</sup> See Victor Turner Dramas, Fields and Metaphors. Symbolic Action in Human Society. Cornell University Press. 1974.

incorporated back into linearity, into the synchronic. The anxiety that differences provoke must be contained.

### Genealogies of the self.

Throughout the interviews it became apparent that human relations, that is, our relation to ourselves and to others, are embedded in a grid of ethical 'intelligibility'. This sense of 'ethics', of knowing oneself, suffused the narratives, whether the focus was on positioning oneself as 'boy' or as 'father' or as 'daughter' or as 'student'. The desire to be a 'good mother' or a 'good father' was/is interacted and interpellated through outer-directed narratives and inner monologue. It is this latter dynamic which remains the most difficult for the observer/outsider to elicit, yet its processes are posited within the dynamics of re-memorisation. What we say to others, or about others, or have said to ourselves by others, and so forth, is always/already intricately in what we say to ourselves. Hacking makes a similar point when writing about 'self-improvement'. He says:

It is seldom force that keeps us on the straight and narrow; it is conscience. It is less knowledge produced in the human sciences that we use as our guide in life than self-knowledge. To say this is not to return to subjectivity. There is nothing private about this use of acquired words and practical techniques. The cunning of conscience and self-knowledge is to make it feel private.<sup>10</sup>

This aspect of 'conscience' was particularly highlighted in the similarity of 'stories' told by those individuals I interviewed who were kin-related. The similitude of 'moral codes', revealed that they changed very slowly over 'time'. As injunctions to live by, a way of working upon the self - of setting ideals, they were, however, employed differently, from generation to generation. A notion of 'ethical substance' informs some possible ways to behave or to be in order to serve some immediate end, and this 'substance' forms part of the legacy to subsequent generations. It is individuated as 'private'.

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<sup>10</sup> Ian Hacking, 'Self-Improvement' in David Couzens Hoy (ed.) Foucault: A Critical Reader. London, Basil Blackwell, 1986, p. 236. Emphasis in original.



But self-knowledge is very much a 'public' construction, as can be observed within familial relations in the discursive positionings attendant within this network. Within mother/daughter dyads, father/daughter dyads, brother/sister dyads and sister/sister dyads in the interviews one can observe how familial constraints interact with, and upon, individuals.<sup>11</sup> Events or incidences can continue to affect or contain family members in successive generations. Consider the following:

Margaret: What do you think your parents expected of you?

**Elizabeth Noonan: We had to use our manners and know they expected to bring us up properly, and they expected us to be polite and sociable.**

Margaret: When you grew up, what do you think they expected of you?

**Elizabeth: Just how we got through, I don't know. I think they were pleased for the boys to be carrying on farming where they left off.**

Margaret: And what were the girls to do, then?

**Elizabeth: I suppose they thought we should get married and move off. (Laughter).<sup>12</sup>**

In the continuing dialogue Elizabeth stated that girls 'really had no choice but to get married' and stressed that 'times had changed'. She cited the incidence of her sister, Margaret, not being allowed to obtain a paid position in the town. 'Father was very cross with her.' Her narrative, however, did not overtly reflect this sense of social change. There is a sense of 'closures':

Margaret: As a parent, did you try to be like your own parents?

**Elizabeth: Yes. I was about fifteen miles away from my mother but we had the 'phone on then and I could talk to her often. And we had cars which made a lot of difference.**

Margaret: What do you think made a 'good mother' or a 'good father'?

**Elizabeth: I think as long as you tend your child and look after them properly. If you bring them up to be honest and**

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11 Elizabeth Noonan/Patricia Fitzpatrick; Francis Noonan/Patricia Fitzpatrick; Agnes Burns, Walter O'Loughlin/Eileen O'Loughlin; and Molly Dutton/Margaret Kenny constitute the kin dyads. Francis Noonan was a first cousin of the O'Loughlins.

12 OHL., Elizabeth Noonan, née Slattery.

**straightforward. I think that was the way we were brought up. Being honest in what we said and did.**

Margaret: What did you want for Patricia as she got older?

**Elizabeth: To be happy. Her father and her uncle wanted to set her up in a hairdressing business in town, but she didn't really want to leave us. Afterwards, she got a job at BHP, married and lived close by.<sup>13</sup>**

The theme of 'not wanting to leave the family' is a dominant and recurring myth in this family, one which was quite fascinating to trace. Francis Noonan had disliked leaving his farm to board at Christian Brother's College in Adelaide and was able to use the outbreak of World War One to return home well before his allotted time. Elizabeth Noonan had been a weekly boarder and had finished her schooling at the age of twelve when she contracted diphtheria. She had no wish to return to school and so, did not. Patricia Fitzpatrick, their daughter, had boarded with her grandparents in Jamestown, on a weekly basis, and had experienced acute loneliness. All three carried forward in their narratives a mythologised sense of family, of be-ing, a form of 'rootedness', of the necessity to be 'together as one'.

Margaret: Were your parents affectionate to you?

**Patricia Fitzpatrick: Always. My father was always very affectionate. And to me - extremely affectionate. I lived in a very affectionate home, and family and extended family. Especially on the Noonan side. More so than on mum's side. Except I was closer to my Grandma and Grandpa Slattery, but the Noonan family were very affectionate and genuinely so.**

**I was extremely close to both my parents, but I spent a lot of time with my father.**

Margaret: What kind of person do you think your parents wanted you to be?

**Patricia: I suppose they felt a responsibility for me. And we had such a tremendous closeness. They never ever closed the door on me - no matter what I did, they never did that. I only remember hurting them because I was wanting to be out all the time, perhaps with people they didn't like me to be with - that sort of thing.**

Margaret: You weren't 'set up' as to what your adult life should be?

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13 Ibid.

**Patricia:** No. Their ambition for me was to have a good job. It was said to me that I could have been a hairdresser and had my own business because my father was prepared to buy into one. A very elderly uncle, who lived in Adelaide, wanted to buy a block of land and build a business on it. And it was said that if I wanted to be, I could have been a hairdresser and have had my own business. But you had to go to the city to do it - that was the stumbling block, I didn't want to leave. The next best thing for Mum and Dad's ambition for me was to have good secretarial skills and get a good job in B.H.P.

I went through a stage where I thought I wanted to be a nurse. I had my papers, but I couldn't leave home. So I had the choice. I would have broken their hearts if I had gone.

**Margaret:** Was it an 'open' or 'hidden' agenda - that you'd stay close, get married and have a family?

**Patricia:** Yes, it was hidden. We never talked about it, but it was considered the done thing.<sup>14</sup>

The power of family myths is that they shape events and practices. In the trans-generational Noonan/Fitzpatrick narratives the emphasis on not leaving home, of being together, was the clue to the dynamics of the whole family. The thread continues:

**Margaret:** When you were a parent, whom did you model yourself after?

**Patricia:** I often wonder about that. I suppose I always knew I had a very caring mother and father who dearly loved me. And I always only ever knew love in the family, so it was never hard for me to love my children. Which I did, enormously. And I suppose from being an only child to having children of your own, perhaps that was an unconscious thing. But I never found it hard. I enjoyed my children because being an outdoor person it was natural for them to be involved in whatever I did. And I was doing a lot of things at that time. So they just naturally moved into it.

I don't recall ever wanting to be any different - or very consciously setting out to be any different in my own life. Then again, it was an entirely different environment, I suppose.

**Margaret:** How often did you see your parents?

**Patricia:** Nearly everyday. When I was a young woman I just continued in being involved in everything and I suppose that helped me get through a time when I might have looked back and said, 'Well, I was too young' and wanted to do this and that. (Pat married at nineteen years of age.) And that wasn't available to me, but it was all still available to me

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14 OHL., Patricia Fitzpatrick, née Noonan.

because of Mum being so handy. I never felt deprived because I kept myself totally involved.

Margaret: What do you think made a 'good mother'?

Patricia: I don't think I ever stopped to think. I often wonder how I got through that period with little children. I don't think there was even a time, I always knew as a parent there was a certain responsibility, but I don't ever remember anything getting in the way to make me think I had to put up with two kids. And I don't ever recall it being a terrible chore.

Margaret: So you didn't have some sort of idealised version of what a 'good mother' was?

Patricia: I think I must have just gone from year to year without sitting and making any great set plans. I think it was just a natural progression. How that comes about I don't really know. I think I definitely had rules for myself with my children. My children were always in bed on time, had good food, hygiene. Certainly rules - and I never really broke those rules as far as times for sleep, et cetera. Everything worked about that. But it was obvious that I could often do that because I always had my mother to support me.

Margaret: What did you think made a 'good father'?

Patricia: I always had expectations. To care about them and share and look after them and take them out. Care about them, as much as anything. There was never any conflict over that.

Margaret: What did you rear your children to believe in?

Patricia: I always had expectations for my children (daughters) to care about people. Not only family, but to care and respect other people. I always had hard and fast rules about respect and the truth. And looking after themselves as people.

Margaret: Could you give or do things for your children that your parents were unable to do for you?

Patricia: That's a hard question because environment and time, living, I wouldn't like to put one against the other. I had definite ideas about what I wanted for my children and I think as I grew up I could see the restrictive growing up periods for what I wanted for my children. I often thought I wanted my children to have what I had the opportunity to have and knocked it back. So that's no one's fault outside your own. So that would have been the prime reason of why I made the decision to leave Whyalla.

I had the opportunity to go to a boarding school and to do a lot of things, but I didn't take them. I think I wanted my girls to have those opportunities and they would not have got those opportunities had we stayed there. But I would have said they

would have probably gone away from the town, or perhaps they would have knocked it back, too, because they were very close to home.<sup>15</sup>

In terms of psychic patterns of power and desire the narrative encapsulates the essence of her childhood experiences. Patricia had internalised an ethos of moral responsibility to/for family members, of some sense of 'danger' in moving beyond the family's gaze, beyond this 'controlled' known environment. This story was handed on to her daughters and continues to be re-worked in their family myths.<sup>16</sup> However, the narrative is also used by Patricia to conceal any tensions and contradictions that have shaped this family myth. What she does reveal, either consciously or unconsciously, are the investments she has made, how she has actively positioned and re-positioned herself within the available gender-differentiated discursive practices.

Within the inter-relations of all parents and all children there is a constant negotiation of relations of power. It is within these constructs that the desire to 'stay at home', to 'sneak out at night', to be 'a good boy' or a multitude of other positionings are acted upon, or not. The relationship of siblings are particularly interesting in rendering as 'intelligible' the gendered signifying practices of childhood and the power relations which interpenetrate the production and re-production of subjectivity.

William Burns and his sister Agnes Clarke were involved in many shared family activities, as well as some which were not. Both recalled being taken to the Victoria Park Racecourse by their grandfather, when they were little. William remembers it in his narrative:

**We lived about a mile and a half from Victoria Park Racecourse and I would go with my grandfather. He lived with us, he was retired, and we would go. There would**

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15 Ibid.

16 When Patricia moved her family to Adelaide, her parents decided to accompany her. They lived in the same house until Patricia's new house was built, one kilometre away. Her daughters also have apparently positioned themselves as not wishing to move away from the family. In post-tape discussions Patricia mentioned that both 'girls' had stayed 'close by' and were living in close proximity. At one stage her elder daughter, Ann, had strongly resisted relocation to Melbourne. Patricia's grandchildren also appeared to have internalised the code of 'keeping close', 'keeping the family together'. It is a dynamic that has been transferred and individuated in new forms.

always be an illegal bookmaker on the flat, standing under a tree, and he (grandfather) would like to have a shilling on a horse. All of a sudden there'd be a scare - 'the cops are coming' - and everybody would break up and after a while they would go and you'd go back. Back in those days they used to have what they called the poor man's race books, just on a little piece of cardboard and they would hand out these with all the horses names and barrier positions on. They used to have the (official) race books but not many would buy the race books in those days. The bookies would pay out on whatever the tote (sic) paid.... With the illegal bookmakers you were always paid. There was no worries with them.<sup>17</sup>

Agnes recalls it quite differently:

**My Grandfather would go to the football and he would take us over to Unley Oval to the football and he also used to go to the races sometimes. And we'd walk to Victoria Park and go with him to the races. We'd play around. My grandfather used to like to have a shilling on something.**

Margaret: What was it like at the races - what would you do?

**Agnes: We always went on the flat. You could get on the flat for nothing at Victoria Park. We used to love to go to the races. We didn't bet on anything.**

Margaret: Would you actually watch the races?

**Agnes: Yes. They had more jumping races in those days and we'd get near one of the jumps and watch them jump.<sup>18</sup>**

Interviewed separately, it is fascinating to observe that only the memory about Grandfather betting a shilling on a horse is shared as a joint telling. William's memory positions him as an active participant in these race day outings and his narrative is full of action details. Agnes' narrative positions her as a passive observer and relies exclusively on the use of the past tense, in contrast to William's use of both present and past tense. There are many examples in William's and Agnes' narratives where the frequency of direct speech and indirect speech and the nature of the verbs that introduce direct speech establish Agnes and William, in their choice of direct speech, as either 'active' or 'passive', 'participant' or 'spectator'.

Consider the discussion of playing marbles and euchre:

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17 OHL, William Burns.

18 OHL, Agnes Clarke, née Burns.

Agnes: We each had our own marbles. Bill always won. I don't know whether children play marbles now. Bill liked marbles. He was mad on them. He was good at marbles, I suppose that's why he liked them. Some were better marbles than others. And mum would have to make us a marble bag.

[On euchre.] There was always euchre. We used to go down to the Church to the euchre parties and Bill would stand up and play. Grandfather taught us both to play.

Margaret: When would the parties be held?

Agnes: At night. Down in the hall. Bill won a prize and dad won the booby (prize) one night. He was seven when he won his first prize. He was a good euchre player.<sup>19</sup>

William recalled playing marbles, thus:

Back in those days we used to play marbles and we used to have a piece of chalk and on the bitumen footpaths we'd draw what was known as a fat. It was like a fish - I suppose about 30cm. long and 15cm. wide. And then we'd draw a line about 180 cm. from the fat and you'd start off playing your marbles from there. Lots of kids used to have ball bearings, what they used to call toyas in those days. And you'd both put a couple of marbles on the fat, and if you got all his and your own, then you kept those. Back in those days there were little bottles of cool drinks - they didn't have screw caps on them, but a marble top on them. You'd press the marble top down and that would open the bottle of drink. And then after I'd finish the drink, I'd break the bottle to get the marble out. Glass marbles they were....

[On euchre.] My grandfather used to - he was retired and he lived with us, and he taught me how to play draughts and cribbage and euchre. As a matter of fact, talking about euchre, back in those days they used to have euchre parties at the Church and I can remember on one occasion going to the Parkside and Eastwood Institute to a euchre party. I think there would have been eighty or a hundred people or more there. I was too small to sit down on a chair and I won the first prize at the euchre party. I won the men's first prize.<sup>20</sup>

It is no mere accident that Agnes' and William's narratives are re-constructed differently, and this is not only due to experiencing them differently but because they have re-constructed themselves in opposition to each other. The dichotomisation of male/female produces practices which are always/already locked in power/knowledge

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19 Ibid.

20 QHI., William Burns.

relations, within which the production of desire is inextricably interwoven. The structure of Agnes and Williams' discourse is produced as a tissue or web where the texture of the verbal is always/already crossed with the signifying chain of the visible. 'Boy' as sign and 'girl' as sign are always/already constructed within a normalising gaze of adult control and supervision. How Agnes and William came to see themselves, that is, to know themselves, (the relation of the eye to the 'I') is a production of gendered power relations.<sup>21</sup> The multiple significations of sex/gender imbricated in children's play practices, in their games and leisure activities, are productive of power relations. Agnes signifies in the discourse that she is less powerful than her brother. She praises him for his skills at marbles and euchre. She invests in herself the position of nurturer, of Other. She positions herself as passive to William, whom they both position as active. 'Male' power is established as 'real' and 'legitimate' through their discursive practices. The dynamics of this interplay continue to be reproduced in re-memorisation.

Yet, within the narratives, disruptions to such dualisms, were articulated. William frequently positioned himself as a 'mummy's boy', 'a good boy' and as 'physically, not strong'. But such was his investment in positioning himself as strong, he frequently marginalised his sister in his narrative, or else adopted a complementarity mode. The desire to be strong underlay his positionings in particular discursive frames of reference, and the structuring of subjectivity itself. His relation to his mother was, according to both Agnes' and William's discourses, exceedingly close - almost to the point of Agnes' exclusion. Throughout his narrative, William recalls both the kinds of play and ways of 'helping' which his mother made available. It was Agnes who was required to help with the washing, Agnes who set the table for meal times and Agnes who had set house-chores. William was free to play with his (boy) friends, help his father or play card games with his grandfather. This deliberate (or unconscious) fostering of children's ability to take up adult positions underscores 'dependent' or 'authoritative' gendered

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<sup>21</sup> See Jacqueline Rose Sexuality in the Field of Vision. London, Virago, 1986; and, Michel Foucault, 'The Eye of Power' in Colin Gordon (ed.) Power/Knowledge : Selected Interviews and other Writings 1972-1977. Brighton, Harvester Press, 1980.



activities. Agnes' 'female gender' and Williams' 'male gender' are continually confirmed and reproduced within the mother's positioning of them. Thus Agnes' and William's reconstructions of playing marbles and euchre form a critical re-telling of 'play' activities as these are already linked through signification to discursive practices of the adult world, which provide frameworks in which 'the child' is re-produced in positions which are ordained through the power relations operating within and on the family. How Agnes and William appropriate(d) such subject positionings depends on the process that the role of emotionality, fantasy, identification and the production of desire plays in both they and their parents.

The interviewing of Eileen O'Loughlin and her brother, Walter O'Loughlin, was particularly illustrative of the ways in which the workings of desire are produced through power relations. Their rememberings of their mother, and her interactions with them, is contrasted with those of their father:

**Eileen:** My mother was very organised. Father wasn't domesticated in any way at all. He'd come in for his meals and when he'd finished he'd go out. He always had his pipe in his mouth.

Margaret: What about the financial organisation?

**Eileen:** She'd just get what she wanted, that's all there was about it. Some of the wives would have to ask their husbands if they could have this, that or the other. There was never any arguments over money or anything like that.

Margaret: Would your father help your mother at all?

**Eileen:** He was pretty hopeless. He was the youngest of a big family and he had about six older sisters than him. He didn't have to do anything and they absolutely spoilt him.

**Walter:** He got away with murder. (Laughs)

Margaret: How would you describe your relationship with your parents?

**Eileen:** We just took being close for granted. That's what different ones say to me - living here, how strange it was. (Eileen looked after an unmarried brother, Michael, until his death, and her widowed brother, Walter.) They are my family. The single ones always seems to stick together. I was always home. Mother and I did everything together.

We could talk to them (parents) about anything. We weren't allowed to be underhanded though. There were some who did things behind their parent's back.

Walter: We were never allowed to answer back. I got the cane at school one day. The boys couldn't get home quick enough to tell. And all the time we were at school, mother never sent a note to the teachers. If you didn't do your homework, you had to report yourself.

Eileen: She (mother) couldn't stand it if you told a lie. That's when you got into trouble. If you owned up you got off. Doesn't matter what you did - if you owned up you got off. If you lied, that's when you got into trouble. She used to say, 'If you speak the truth you can look any man in the eye, but one lie would never stand alone, it needed another dozen to cover it up'. You would never get off with one lie and if you start telling lies you want a good memory. That's what she always said.

Margaret: Were there any other people who were important to you?

Eileen: Not like mother and father. I suppose they were our world, really.

Margaret: What do you remember most about them?

Eileen: Mother never went around in her dressing gown and slippers. You never saw her out of her room unless she was dressed and her hair done. Father was always dressed properly, too.... When they went into Jamestown she always called him "Mr. O'Loughlin" in public and he always addressed her as "Mrs. O'Loughlin".... She was a real lady.<sup>22</sup>

In this telling (and remembering that it is only one of many possible 'tellings') Eileen and Walter present their mother as 'powerful' and their father as 'powerless'. This is largely due to their discussions of their mother's 'domestic' labour, and in this respect, their father contributed little practical help. His work on the farm, in the fields, is marginalised in their accounts.<sup>23</sup> That this division of labour was perceived as 'natural' relates to the strong investments Eileen and Walter individuated in their perception of the role of 'woman' and 'mother' as nurturer. Eileen, as the eldest child, and a female, was particularly appreciated by her mother as Mrs. O'Loughlin's 'right

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22 QHL, Eileen and Walter O'Loughlin.

23 However, this view of an 'ineffectual' father was 'verified' in the narrative of their cousin, Francis Noonan. See QHL, Francis Noonan, *ibid*. It is interesting to note that some family myths are incorporated in wider kinship groupings and 'passed down'.

hand'. Both of them, according to Eileen's narratives, derived great satisfaction from the relationship. As Eileen learnt to position herself in similar ways to her mother, she did so because she obviously felt such investments 'paid off'. She continued to 'nurture' her siblings long after her parents' death - eschewing marriage to do so. Desire was/is intricately within her family's power relations and within the available gendered positionings.

The Legacies: The Continuities and the Contestations.

The final 'section' of my interviews focused on those experiences of the men and women, who had children, as parents: the 'daughter' as 'mother' and the 'son' as 'father'. They were invited to reflect on any trans-generational changes to the world of 'childhood' and/or to reflect on aspects of children's play that had stayed 'the same' or 'similar' to their own practices and activities. As with their memories of their own childhood, the interviewees ranged widely on many related topics, from changes in health care practices to the availability of store bought toys. All interviewees were invited to comment on what were the biggest changes they had noticed from their childhood days to the present.<sup>24</sup>

While many responses shared similar themes, such as the difficulties of sustaining a home and family during the depression, or the attempt to provide their children with more material possessions, or give them 'opportunities' they had been 'denied', all of the interviewees re-constructed memories within processes that tapped long-term needs and subconscious desires:

Margaret: Were economic conditions much changed when you had your child?

**Len Ellis: We had one daughter and we did everything we could for her. When she was a small child she used to turn the wheelbarrow upside down and sit on the barrow and turn the wheel. I used to put a shilling a week away into a tin and I bought her a pedal cart for Christmas. She went to Sunday School and they formed a gym club, and she was ten years and 11 months when they had their competition in Adelaide. I think it was in the Adelaide Town Hall. And from the**

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24 See Appendices for Interview 2 Schedule, and key points of discussion.

participating clubs they chose a team to go to the Ballarat competitions every year. She was chosen this particular year, but she was only about a fortnight too young.

They had to be eleven on that night, so she couldn't go. She went the following year and it cost us quite a fair bit of money. Her mother was a dressmaker, then she had to stand down for four years, then she went again.

Margaret: So you made a commitment to give her the opportunity.

Les: Yes. She went twice.

Rita Ellis (Lorraine's stepmother): If it hadn't been for her mother being able to make her clothes, she wouldn't have been able to go.

Len: She spent hours sewing on sequins - they were very elaborate costumes, I might add. A lot of work. They used to have their own concert in the Unley Town Hall. They wanted me to be President of their club, but I said, 'I don't think so'. They taught her lots of good things. When she went to Ballarat she had a list of everything that she wanted, it was pasted inside her case and when she packed it she ticked it off. And today she always writes a list of everything she wants.<sup>25</sup>

Beneath the surface level of this discourse is a sense of a 'world' that is a densely woven fabric of permissions, of prohibitions, of obligations and rules, which are sustained and enforced at a thousand points, a web of processes and systems of shared beliefs and possibilities of desires and satisfaction. While inter-penetrated within the exigencies of daily life and its attendant power/knowledge relations, the sewing of a sequined costume and the sending of a daughter to Ballarat for a gymnastics competition offers a glimpse, through the narrative, of how human beings 'represent' and structure 'their world'. In making sense of the disorder and changes to their world, both Rita and Len offer the need to 'love' as the only way to allow for change and beneficial action in the world.

Len: The point is - when you marry and have your family and they marry and have their own family, that is your own circle. The rest are only friends. But you devote your life to the family.

Rita: Everything was family. We always expected all the family to come home on a Sunday night for tea.

Len: My family came first in my life.

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25 OHL, Rita and Len Ellis.

**Rita:** I think that's where the trouble is today - and the love has to be there. If there's no love then you have got nothing. It (love) comes from a home where you see the love generated.<sup>26</sup>

Heterosexual love, the love of family, the love of children is enshrined in most discourses, consciously or not. Its historical production as 'natural' is completely elided. Dominant culture is taken as nature. This legacy is 'handed on' to be re-worked and re-formed by the next generations. The critical question of why the itinerary of 'man's' desires should describe 'woman' and 'child' is never postulated in the narratives. Where there is confrontation in heterosexual relations it is usually played out over issues relating to the nurturance or the control of the child/ren. The desires of 'mother' and the desires of 'wife' are sites of contestation in the narratives.

For Coralie Green the investment in motherhood was poignant:

**Margaret:** What expectations did you have of yourself?...

**Coralie:** I was twenty nine when I got married and I was thirty four when I had Sue. I desperately wanted a child, I had a lot of trouble conceiving so she was very much a wanted child. I think I had no doubt or hesitation in my mind that I would be a good mother. I was just very confident that I would know all about it. I was very scared when I actually had this small human being that I was responsible for. More a physical scaredness of handling her.

**Margaret:** With the 'bond' with your mother - did you ever consciously set out to do things differently from her?

**Coralie:** For sure. I felt that my mother towards me was a very poor mother. I felt unwanted, I guess, would be the main thing, right through. I was just there - I didn't feel cherished. But I knew what good mothering was.

**Margaret:** What was good mothering?

**Coralie:** I think good mothering to me is letting a child know that they are wanted, that they are cared for and you really care and share in their upbringing. And also letting the person be a person in their own right but also seeing their potential and encouraging them to develop.

[Later] **Margaret:** What about your mother-in-law or father-in-law, were they on the scene and involved with Sue?

**Coralie:** Yes. Well, you see, ten months after she was born, even while I was pregnant I had doubts about the marriage. I wasn't being treated very well. They didn't have a great deal - mostly because I wasn't sure what was going to happen.

**Margaret:** ...after he left, was there any contact with Sue?

**Coralie:** Yes. Even when he was there though, I'd say, 'Would you go and have a look at how the baby is?' and I'd go in about a quarter of an hour afterwards, and even though he'd been in, the baby was all uncovered. This sort of thing happened many times. He was a University lecturer, but in some sense he just didn't have a clue.

**Margaret:** Do you think it was a deliberate attempt to not form a bond, or he just didn't have ...?

**Coralie:** I think he just didn't have a clue, emotionally he hasn't been able to bond with any people, even now - even with his second family, the bonding just isn't there. I think he is frightened of emotional attachment.

**Margaret:** Obviously the marriage finished, but did you have some kind of expectations that he would have ... strong fatherhood role with Sue after the marriage breakdown?

**Coralie:** No. I think I made those decisions. I think I felt he hadn't a great deal to give. I thought he wasn't mature, I felt he was still a child himself. In fact, on one occasion when Sue was about three, I don't know what contact we were having with each other, or over what, but I sort of said, 'This child is three - she is more emotional and maturer than you are'.

**Margaret:** So, all decisions you were prepared to shoulder yourself, or you felt you had to anyway?

**Coralie:** I felt I was best capable. Looking back, I don't think I would have changed much. I feel it would have been nice for Sue to have had a relationship with her father but I had to do things like see my solicitor and say 'Will you for goodness sake get his solicitor to tell him to take Sue to the Zoo or somewhere'. I had to make suggestions to make the access acceptable - she just didn't want to go - she would cry and cry. She went over and spent a weekend with him, perhaps in the last five years, or when she was about twenty-five, and I sort of said, 'I think you need to go for your own sake as much as for his sake'. She went by train and I met her at the station and she came back and she put her arms around me, and she said, 'Mum, I am so pleased that we didn't grow up living with him? She said, 'He has got no relationship with his own children, he beats the second wife.'<sup>27</sup>

I cite this narrative, at length, because it vividly depicts the tension inherent in 'mother' and 'daughter' positionings, in the 'daughter' as 'mother' positionings and 'woman' and 'wife' positionings. The investments and satisfactions involved for Coralie in her various positionings are contradictory and fraught with tension. The pleasure and comforts of others are counterposed with her own needs and comforts. Her investment in her daughter is paramount:

Margaret: ...what did you decide as being important for Sue?

**Coralie: I think I wanted stability and I think I made sure she got that. Here I was, she was ten months of age, I took him back when she was three, because he said it was going to work, and then I moved out of the house and took her with me when she was about seven and a half. And from then on I did tend to put her first.<sup>28</sup>**

Years later, Coralie re-married and she speaks with pride when she says '**She (Sue) had made a lovely relationship with him (her step-father) which was a joy to see. She really loved and cared for him.**'<sup>29</sup> This desire for 'love', for a 'loving relationship' within heterosexual marriage and within 'family', centres as a pivotal axis in trans-generational 'legacies'. In tracing the interviewees' re-constructed memories of their parents, their own childhood, their own parenthood and their offsprings' childhoods, the 'well-spring' of desires would appear to 'emerge' from a complex web of negotiated feelings, beliefs, myths and practices, from both the past and the present. It is always/already a desire to fulfill 'unmet' needs. Desire is socially and psychically constructed and re-constructed across and through the generations.

The 'unmet' needs of childhood are frequently re-memorised in the narratives. Kathleen McLean was able to articulate clearly that '**Mum had a thing about education because she didn't have it and she made up her mind that all her children were going to have as good an education as possible**', and also posited that:

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28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.

When I was a child you had to do what you were told, or else! I put it down to the two Wars. Self-preservation is the main instinct and if kids are starving they will get something to eat somehow. They will take, steal, do anything. Look what came out of the first War - aeroplanes and everything. And the second War - the same. I don't know what's going to happen after the next one.<sup>30</sup>

This sense of agency also permeated her final words. 'I think, looking back, I must have had a very happy childhood. I got into trouble and all sorts of things but if I got punished I knew I deserved it, or it was worth it'.<sup>31</sup>

Most interviewees signified that they felt they had more fun than children did now: 'we always made our own fun', 'we were never bored', 'we were free to run around'. A 'rosy glow' frequently permeated the memories of children, while the 'dangers' for contemporary children were stressed. Narratives were frequently contradictory.

**Jean Sudlow:** I think children have a lot more freedom now and they have a lot more to say. They make up their own minds about things. They work things out for themselves more than we would have. You might suggest things but they have got their own ideas. I really do think children are more independent now. They don't rely on their parents as much as we did in our family. If my mother said I couldn't go anywhere, then I wouldn't go there.

Margaret: Do you think that's worse or better?

**Jean:** With all the dangers around these days, you just can't let a child do their own thing. You would want to know where they are going and what they are doing. These days there is a lot of peer group pressure - if they are not in it then they are out. I think the temptations are much greater now. Very much greater. We didn't have the temptation in our day that they have now.<sup>32</sup>

Jean's juxtaposition of contemporary children's 'excess of freedom' with the 'increase of danger' to them is indicative of a contemporary reworking of 'old' moral rules and new social norms. This regulation of images is touched on by Veronica Sladdin.

Margaret: What do you think are some of the changes to the way children played from your childhood days to now?

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30 QHI., Kathleen McLean.

31 Ibid. My emphasis.

32 QHI., Jean Sudlow.



**Veronica:** I don't know about the way they play so much, but one of the biggest changes was from being naturally brought up - to all this psychology and so forth. When you stop to think of all the years that children were brought up - everybody has got a different idea - but at the same time when I hear some of the things I hear! I heard something the other day (on the radio). They are continually bringing people here from overseas to tell us what to do and how to do it. Not only bringing up children - all sorts of scientific things. What's wrong with our people? Why do they have to bring them here? People have been bringing up children for years and years. And people with no money, like my father, out on those properties - and they walked everywhere. They all grew up, but they didn't do anything like the kids today. Some people say there was naughty children in those days. Yes, they were naughty, but it was a different kind of naughty.

**Margaret:** Do you think its helped to have 'experts' around these days?

**Veronica:** No I don't. When I had Peter (grand son), he was just getting a little bit out of hand. I can't remember the man's name, but he was somebody that knew his (Peter) father. I was speaking to this man on the 'phone one day and he said, 'Go down to Marion', they had a social worker at the time. He said, 'He might be able to give you some advice'. I went down (Marion is a suburb of Adelaide) and apparently the man was only there on Friday, and this was early in the week. And they said, 'Would you like to speak to Miss ...?' I haven't got very much time at all for social workers. Anyway she was at Brighton. I never heard so much rubbish in all my life! 'You, mustn't do this or that? Well, I left pretty smartly. And there was a young married couple waiting to see her and I thought, 'what is she going to tell them?'<sup>33</sup>

This inextricable intertwining of the 'social' and 'the psychic', as evidenced in Veronica's narrative, indeed, in all of the narratives, delineates that power works through subject's actions and that these take place in practices that already delimit and condition action. 'Self-knowledge' is always caught in a materiality that is an historical product. Some, like Paddy Baker, concluded their interviews on a pessimistic note:

**Margaret:** Is there anything you felt deprived of in your childhood?

**Paddy:** Nothing in the world. I was never deprived of anything. I can honestly say that I have never been hungry and I am ninety-two next April. I might have been short of a few bob (shillings) at different times, but not for long. I

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33 QHL, Veronica Sladdin. (Social worker's name deleted.)

was always prepared to work. To earn it. My opinion is that one of these days something awful is going to happen. The monetary system is going to crash. You have too many people - not making hundreds, not making thousands, but millions. Now its got up to billions and not far off trillions. Something is going to crash - the monetary system in my opinion.

Margaret: You don't think today's generation will have it better than you?

Paddy: I don't think they could ever have it better ... the young ones, I'm afraid are going to pay, unless something happens, they will be the ones who pay. Of course, my mum used to talk like this!<sup>34</sup>

Others preferred to position themselves as archetypal story tellers and 'closed' the narrative on a point of resolution or optimism:

Margaret: Was home a fairly happy place, then?

Horrie: Yes. Beautiful childhood.

Margaret: What did you enjoy most about it?

Horrie: Playing. I wouldn't change my life. My life was always taken up with drawing and painting. Not only for myself but other kids would come along and ask me to draw and paint for them. Beautiful childhood.<sup>35</sup>

Embedded within re-memorised narratives are the myths, the desires and the material practices of our culture - multiple stories, multiple histories. Yet the 'I' of the narrative is also the 'I' of 'resemblance', of 'analogy', of 'identity' and 'difference'. It, too, is the 'I' of classification, of organisation and of genealogy, and of 'history'. It is the 'I' of ascription and inscription. The impulse to talk about one another in different ways, in terms of different qualities and levels of mutual consciousness, precedes literacy in all human communities. All human acts and institutions are enveloped in webs of interpretative words that we use to 'describe' interpellated actions. If, as many historians state, they seek to know humans and their practices, to understand, document and analyse their manifestations, to point the ways for re-incorporation or re-

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34. QHI., Paddy Baker.

35 QHI., Horrie Simpson.

construction, then the question is not when historians will pursue the dynamic of 'memory', but why they have come so late?

#### The reflexive dynamics of change

Embedded in the dynamic of memory are the changes in successive generations - in state, social and individual forms and practices. Just as this thesis has posited that the family is not a self-evident, unitary and unproblematic entity, nor is the individual, it also posits that the state cannot be regarded as a unified entity. Threaded throughout this narrative of children's culture, and their play, is a delineation of various state incursions into the 'world' of adults and children which reveal 'the state' to be a multi-dimensional phenomenon that varies across 'time' - in both its activities and functions. Just as individual agency is contradictory and conflictual, so, too, is state agency. For 'the state', 'the social' and 'the individual' are inextricably linked. Along with sites of 'the family' and 'the home', 'the neighbourhood, 'the school' and 'the body', 'the state' is also a site of contestation and struggle. Groups and individuals are continuously engaged in attempts to re-form and re-shape the social world by altering the power relations expressed within, and by, it.

The shift in children's play practices, from outdoor play to play within organised adult parameters, is not possible without a conceptualisation of the total culture of which it is a part. This shift was informed by a series of transformations in the form and mode of operation of individuals and the state, across the generations. Frequently, state agencies and individuals were in harmony over the 'nature' and 'purpose' of children's play, as I have discussed in the street children's campaign. Leisure control of children's street play and games was a generally agreed upon way, by groups and individuals, to 'rid' society of 'pests' and 'low bred idleness'. Disagreements in how to re-form the children of the streets were overcome in the face of a unified fear of childish unruliness. Parallel to this problem of controlling 'the masses', there was a shared concern for the improvement and character development of the future technical and professional leaders of society and the

'fitness' of the women who would produce these future leaders. 'Appropriate' theories of play were developed to meet each of these circumstances, as I have previously outlined.

Within the compulsory school and its playground, disorderly children could best be superintended. Theorising about play, in consequence, 'dictated' that it was of inherent value for such children and youth if their play was re-formed on playgrounds by adult organised games and sports, military drill or calisthenics. In time, the pedagogisation of play was to become a principal education tenet of the twentieth century. Through play the 'true' selves of children would be revealed. Play, for the first time, was to be privileged as having a central role in the development of culture.

Play was to be purposive in 'fitting' children within a framework of a liberal, secular schooling system. The narratives of individuals who attended school in the early decades of the twentieth century reveal that, by the 1930s, 'school' was internalised as the appropriate place to play. 'Schoolfriend' entered the language along with the linguistic constructs of 'schoolchild', 'schoolboy', 'schoolgirl' and 'student'. When the interviewees discussed their children's 'school days', 'play' was re-calibrated as 'sport' and this, too, was posited as a 'natural' phenomenon. 'Leisure' time of their children was described in terms of organised activities - 'The Girl Guides', 'The Boy Scouts', 'The Gym Club', or in various team sports, such as football, cricket, netball, hockey. 'Play' and 'sport' was a new dichotomy.

Parents were encouraged to support their children's 'school sports'. Inter-sports teams became a feature of secondary schools after the Second World War. 'Physical education' now prepared children for these all-important leisure activities. This is not to suggest that all children were incorporated within this new régime, as the interviews testify. However, the centrality of school in the lives of children and their parents became relatively unquestioned. Organised 'visits' to the school to inspect the children's work were postulated as 'necessary' for 'mothers' and children. 'Mothers Clubs' became adjuncts of the school as 'fundraisers' and served as sites of the voluntary observance of state-sponsored norms. Many women interviewed recalled how 'important' it was to 'help

out' at the school, or 'visit the school', and pointed out that it made 'such a difference' to their children.

Jean Sudlow, whose son Ron started school at Allenby Gardens State school in 1941, recalls:

I was on the school committee all the time Ron was at the local primary school. When he was in the infants - when he first started - the teacher used to give them notes to bring home, and this happened to be a visiting day. And they had to put their notes in their socks to bring home. Well, the note didn't come to me - where it went I don't know. And Alan Williams' (friend's son) note never came home either, and I didn't go to the visiting day. I didn't know anything about it and he was so upset. He came home and said I was the only mother who didn't go. That's how he felt about it. When I saw Thelma (Mrs Williams) I said something to her. She said she didn't go either, but Alan didn't say anything.

After that - years after that - my sister-in-law, they were in New Guinea and she married a missionary and then war broke out and the Japs came down. She was evacuating, she had a little baby six months old - of course her husband was left there. Actually, he was killed by the Japanese and she only just found out in recent years what happened. They said the missionaries got away to safety, but that wasn't correct. She sent them here to school, she was working and living with her mother. And the grandfather used to bring the children to school. When the boy came to school I was on the school committee then. And I thought then there is never going to be a visiting day when I don't visit those children. I used to say, 'Let me know when the visiting days are'.

I realised then, how it affects those children if they haven't got anyone there. They are not interested in other people's mothers. Quite often I would go and if I saw a child on their own I would go over and talk with them. I would always go to see John's work. He was very much like Ron, too.<sup>36</sup>

Threaded through this narrative, which meanders in and through world events and family tragedy, there is a dominant discourse on 'naturalism' which reveals the inextricable linkage of the state, the social and the individual. It is 'natural' that Ron expected his mother to visit his classroom, it is 'natural' that Ron is upset, it is 'natural' that this upsets his mother. Compulsory schooling is accepted as 'natural', as is the classroom as the optimal facilitating space for the 'natural' development of each

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36 QHI, Jean Sudlow.

individual. To not visit the child is to threaten his or her psychic health, to render both the child and mother as 'different', and therefore deviant. Within Jean's discourse, one begins to understand the ways in which state-sponsored norms are internalised, individuated, and ultimately mythologised as 'consciousness'. Through the dynamic of memory and the process of re-memorisation one can trace the intersections of the mediated terrains of 'home' and 'school' and the duality of 'public'/'private'. Within such narratives the active reflexive re-alignment of parents (and their children) with the expectations of state authorities about children and their process of 'inculturation' are made visible. Forty years earlier, this narrative of Jean's could simply not have existed; 'motherhood' and its normalisation, along with 'childhood' and its normalisation, was produced and read in entirely different registers.

This thesis has continually posited that the play practices of children are socially constructed. As the nature and form of the state was transformed, so was the nature and form of children's play. To privilege any one single agency is facile and belies the complexity of human agency. That there is symmetry and transparency between the play practices of children and the culture within which they are embedded is not in dispute. But play is always/already more complex than mimesis. As praxis it involves a complex nexus of needs, desires, wants, beliefs, rituals and myths. It is from such a constellation that children's play draws both its inspiration and its sustenance throughout successive generations.

Re-memorised narratives always posited play, freed from the prying eyes of adults, as 'joyful', as 'free' - in some sense a form of spiritual and material replenishment. Childhood was frequently posited as a time of play. 'I loved to play', 'I'd play all day' and 'the best thing was playing' were common refrains. The 'gratuitous' manner of play seemed to serve, for some of the interviewees, as a reminder that happiness lay beyond the all-embracing normalising gaze of the school. For others, their childhood play is re-memorised as a precursor to that of adult sport, from 'rule-less' to 'rule-governed' play. It is fascinating that not one interviewee placed their childhood play

in the register of 'useless' or 'not productive' - contrary to the prevailing duality of 'work'/'play'.

The dominant re-telling of the culture of childhood was that of a form of a rite of passage - a 'movement', through time and space, towards adulthood. State agencies were telescoped as moving in and through this journey towards adulthood. The mechanisms of their shaping and re-shaping of children and their culture were rarely articulated overtly in the narratives. Such are the subterfuges of the unconscious and the invisibility of coercive networks of power that massive incursions into the daily lives of children, and of adults, were postulated as 'natural' and as 'normal'.

'Childhood' has its own dimensions, its own 'structures' and 'agency', its own cultural variants. As a construct and as a dynamic process it is, of course, related to, and informed by, the wider social contexts in which it is situated. The concept of the state is not static, it is not a given. Just as children's play is not reducible to the monological, neither is 'the state'. The title of this thesis, 'Children's Culture and the State', was not arrived at as a privileged form of state agency. Rather there is a curious linguistic 'play' in the word 'state'. Semantically, one can posit that the title implies a state of culture, or the culture of the state, that its focus is to investigate the state of play, or the inter-play of the state, or the state of children's play, and so forth. This is not to render the debate absurd but to recognise that language, too, is critical to any reading of the state and society. For 'play' can also imply a looseness of boundaries, of spacings, of tracing of differences. The phoneme implies reflexivity, a reflexivity that underpins social and state transformations.

As this thesis has posited, 'children's play' and 'the state' are complex historical constructions with socially produced and negotiated categories. Both are critical for any understandings of the relationship between the individual and the society. For children's culture is a concept with a material, psychic, semiotic and mythological existence which, within socially constructed lived experience, is an ongoing process that will always be inextricably linked to, and with, the nature and form of 'the state'. Precisely because of

the reflexivity of social change, the possibilities for multiple histories and multiple selves exist.



**EPILOGUE : THE WHOLE TRUTH?**

## EPILOGUE : THE WHOLE TRUTH?

By way of 'constructing' one 'possible' concluding chapter, from many possibilities open to me, I want to first cite from two works of Lewis Carroll:

"What I was going to say", said the Dodo in an offended tone, "was that the best thing to get us by would be a Caucus-race."

"What is a Caucus-race?" said Alice;...

"Why", said the Dodo, "the best way to explain it is to do it...."

First it marked out a race-course, in a sort of circle ("the exact shape doesn't matter", it said), and then all the party were placed along the course, here and there. There was no "One, two, three, and away!" but they began running when they liked and left off when they like, so that it was not easy to know when the race was over. However, when they had been running half-an-hour or so, and were quite dry again, the Dodo suddenly called out "the race is over!" and they all crowded round it, panting and asking, "But who has won?"<sup>1</sup>

"When I use a word", Humpty Dumpty said, in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean - neither more nor less."

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things".

"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master - that's all".<sup>2</sup>

Both these fragments of discourse contain many of the 'kernels' I have been analysing in this thesis - the intrication of children's play within a nexus of relations of power/knowledge/language and subjectivity. As the Dodo and Humpty Dumpty assert, particular disciplines, régimes of 'truth', bodies of knowledge make possible both what can be done and what can be said. In turn, I would postulate that this also operates in, and on, what can and may be memorised.

Why is it that certain stories are told and not others? Why is it that this thesis has presented this particular telling from all other possibilities?

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis Carroll, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. Reprinted. Trans-World Publishers, 1921, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Lewis Carroll, Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There. Reprinted. Trans-World Publishers, 1921, p. 59

Inherent in the production of this 'narrative' is my decision to 'privilege' meta narratives of the changing dynamics of gender relations and the normalisation of populations. If one story is not more 'verifiable' than another what underpins my construction? My deliberate choice is informed by my desire to present a critique of dominant discourses which delimit human agency. They are meta narratives which fracture tellings of history as 'true', 'rational' and 'liberal'. They resonate with my own experiences as 'child', 'student' and 'teacher'.

The creation of stories, narratives and memories, as accounts of the self and as ways of structuring the world, that is, of 'worldmaking', have direct 'relevance' for 'historians', 'historiographers' and the analysis of 'historical events'. Because most historians have an inadequate grasp of 'event', and of 'narrative', they consider 'history', to be an explanatory endeavour which has severed its ties with storytelling. Allied to this dismissal of remembered narrative is a similar inattention to the concept of temporal aspects of 'history' (along with that of narrative). Be-ing in time (and being in time) is frequently collapsed as a representation of linear time and, as such, 'time' is abstracted. 'Then', 'next', 'now' and so on, are spread out along a linear temporal grid which participates in the dissimulation of both 'historicity' and 'temporality'. This denies the function of memory/narrativity as possessing its own authenticity (and the authenticity of its own inauthenticity) within 'time', that is, within-time-ness. Following Heidegger, saying 'now' is interpreting the making-present. It is this dynamic that is all too often elided in the writing of 'history'. The reconstructed memories of individuals, and their narratives, 'represent' a person acting, who orients himself or herself in circumstances beyond his or her creation, and who produces consequences he or she has not intended. Within this time of the 'now' one can be simultaneously abandoned and responsible - narrative's temporal dialectic. As such, the narrative function provides a transition from within-time-ness to historicity. From the outset, narrative time is time of being-with-others.

In the narratives of kin-related interviewees one was continually aware of the threads of traditions, that is, the communal act of repetition. It is this communal act of repetition, which is simultaneously a new founding act and a recommencement of what has

already been inaugurated, that makes history and that finally makes it possible to write 'history'. In this sense, historiography can be read as nothing more than a passage into writing which then assumes a critical rewriting of the primordial constituting of tradition - as evident in the naive 'level' of 'legends' and 'chronicles'. Repetition, then, can be spoken of as the foundation of historiography - a repetition that is always recounted in a narrative mode. The art of storytelling constructs and reveals the concept of tradition, the sense of a 'common destiny'. For historians to discount this inter-relation of temporality and repetition in narrative, is to discount their own raison d'être, and to constrict their explanatory resources.

It is evident from the interviews I conducted that there is no single, underlying, basic 'story'; rather, there is an unlimited number of other narratives which can be constructed in response to telling or re-telling 'a' story. There are multiple versions, translations, abridgements, adaptations and paraphrasings of 'a basic story' and none of these possible re-tellings is more absolutely basic than any others. The hours and hours of recordings I made were instructive in that it became obvious to me that what we believe to be our 'basic story', whether it be about an incident in 'childhood' or a recent event, is always/already arrived at by the exercise of some set of operations, in accord with some set of principles, that reflect some set of interests, all of which are, by nature, variable and thus multiple. In sharing their sense of self with me, to whatever degree they chose to, the interviewees always did so in accord with certain assumptions and certain purposes which, in turn, created 'hierarchies' of relevance and centrality. Within these self-asserted 'hierarchies' one could distinguish certain elements and relations as being central or peripheral to the interviewees, or were more important or less important, more basic or less basic. Whether they were conscious about the forms and features of their narratives, or versions of, or not, the re-memorised "tellings" of the interviewees demonstrated that they were a function of, among other things, the particular motives that elicited the telling and the particular interest and functions it was designed to serve.

Among any, and all, of the interviewees' narratives is an unlimited number of potentially perceptible relations and inter-relations. Such relations were/are of many

different kinds and orders, including formal and thematic, synchronic and diachronic, and causal and non-causal. Whenever these potentially perceptible relations became actually perceived, for example, 'I knew I would be unhappy' or 'I was happy then' it was by virtue of some set of interests on the part of the perceiver/interviewee. This is self-evident for all of us. I have perceived/re-constructed the interviews in one possible way/form, individual anthropologists, folklorists, psychologists, theologians, other historians and so forth would perceive many other possible different relations amongst the narratives. As new sets of interests can occur at any time within the lives of the interviewees, if I was to approach them again, at a later date, it would be evident in their re-tellings that there can be no ultimately basic set of relations among narratives, and therefore not 'natural' genres or 'essential' types. Therefore, there is no limit to the number or nature of narratives that can be seen as versions or variants of each other. As a listener/perceiver one was aware of the possible social, cultural and other contextual conditions which can/have imposed a difference between a particular narrative event and its re-telling many years later. There is no perfect temporal correspondence between narrative and story. That is part of a unitary myth. The re-memorised narratives of the interviewees are verbalised acts performed in response to various sets of conditions.

Barbara Herrnstein Smith has postulated in On the Margins of Discourse that we interact and inter-relate within a network of circumstantial and psychological variables of which every utterance is a function:

Although some of these conditions are conventionally implied by and are, accordingly, inferable from the linguistic form of an utterance, they are not confined to and cannot be reduced to specific "referents" or "signifieds". In accord with this alternative view of language, individual narratives would be described not as a set of surface-discourse-signifiers that represent (actualize, manifest, map or express) sets of underlying-story-signifieds but as the verbal acts of particular narrators performed in response to - and thus shaped and constrained by - sets of multiple interacting conditions. For any narratives, these conditions would consist of (1) such circumstantial variables as the particular context and material setting (cultural and social, as well as strictly "physical") in which the tale is told, the particular listeners or readers addressed, and the nature of the narrator's relationship to them, and (2) such psychological variables as the narrator's motives for telling the tale and all the particular interests, desires, expectations, memories, knowledge, and prior experiences (including his (sic) knowledge of various events, of course, but also of other narratives and of various

conventions and traditions of storytelling) that elicited his telling it on that occasion, to the audience, and that shaped the particular way he told it.<sup>3</sup>

The point Smith is elaborating is that since all the formal properties of an individual narrative would be regarded as functions of all these multiple interacting conditions, rather than as representations of specific, discrete objects, events, or ideas, the expectation of a conformity or formal correspondence between any of the properties of a narrative and anything else in particular does not arise. This position allows historical narrative, usually distinguished from fiction by the nature of its referents and signifieds, to be reincorporated into its proper universe. This also allows for the reductionist tendency to evaluate historical representation in terms of accuracy of correspondence to what we assume, or decide, to be given or pre-existing sequences to be overcome. History can thus be re-incorporated into narrative:

We may, in fact, extend this point back to those paradigm narratives ... that report not imaginary events but events which presumably occurred at some particular prior time. For like our imaginings of events that never occurred, our knowledge of past events is usually not narrative in structure or given in storylike sequences: on the contrary, that knowledge is most likely to be in the form of general and imprecise recollections, scattered and possibly inconsistent pieces of verbal information, and various visual, auditory and kinesthetic images - some of which, at any given time will be organized, integrated, and apprehended as a specific "set" of events only in and through the very act by which we narrate them as such.<sup>4</sup>

In coming to understand the dialectic of language, behaviour and culture, it is critical for historians to recognise new ways to evaluate and distinguish different forms of historical narratives; that is, a way which 'within time' the discourse of 'the real' and discourse of the imaginary are conjoined. The emphasis is not on how the interviewees re-arranged the chronology of a given sequence of events but rather how, and on what bases, they chose to present some events at the expense of others. That which is not given is critical, too. The dynamics of entextualisation, that is, the social and circumstantial context of the narrative

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<sup>3</sup> Barbara Herrnstein Smith, On the Margins of Discourse : The Relation of Literature to Language. Chicago, Ithaca, 1978, p.17. Emphasis in original.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p.22. Emphasis in original.

and the structure of motivation that sustained the narrative transaction between the interviewee/teller and his/her audience, in this case, me, is also in need of analysis. Yet, the concept of historians engaging in face-to-face 'encounters' is not always/already an acceptable one. The privileging of the written word has imposed a rigid separation from the spoken word. A myth of veridicality enshrines 'historical' writings. However, I would posit that any narrator's behaviour, be it in speech or in writing, is constrained by assumptions he or she has made concerning a present or presumed audience's motives for listening to him/her or reading him/her. Although these assumptions are more usually formed on the basis of the narrator's prior knowledge of his/her audience, various assumptions can also be re-formed on the basis of feedback from the listener(s) during the discourse itself. In the face-to-face situation of the interviews it was a joint re-shaping - I prompted, queried, elicited and so forth. Together, we played out linguistic rituals that were/are part of our shared culture. All of us have learnt to impersonate our audiences in advance; consequently, the feedback controls, to a certain extent, the structure of our memories/narratives.

This is also self-evident when one's audience is silent or absent, such as in the composing of historical texts. 'Historians' structure their 'tales' and their 'narratives' in anticipation of imagined feedback. These texts also share the similarities and differences in the specific conditions that elicit and constrain them. Questions of the 'truth value' would be best reformulated in terms of the variable constraints, conventions and dynamics in which both written and spoken transactions are enmeshed - and analysed accordingly. There is no single basic reason to privilege or give sovereignty to any one form of discourse. The extent to which historians take or claim responsibility for the veridicality of their narrative texts will always serve different interests and will, accordingly, have a different 'kind' of value for individual historians and their audience(s) depending on the nature and constraints of their inter-actions. Conversely, different situations and structures of motivation will elicit (and reward) different kinds and degrees of 'truth' claims. The 'oral' historian and the 'written' historian equally can lay no claim to have identified any single fundamental political purpose or psychological or metaphysical effect of narratives, re-memorised and

re-told, or written, whether such texts are posited as reflecting or supplementing 'reality', re-enforcing or subverting 'ruling ideologies', or as consolations for our mortality or intimations of our immortality.

This thesis has constructed an argument that the ethical and political teleology underlying most 'histories' of 'culture and childhood' must be re-considered. It has also contained an argument that historiographical writing should encompass the dynamic of 'memory'. In introducing the processes and dynamics of narrative structure and mythologemes into the constructing of histories, I have been concerned to critically analyse the problematic of 'historical entextualisation'.

The construction of the individual within such dualisms as 'individual'/'society', 'male'/'female' and 'sex'/'gender' renders problematic analyses of psychical, material and semiotic inter-relations between adults and between adults and children. Dualism posits the state as monolithic and the individual as a unitary entity. In this thesis, I have posited subjectivity as multiple, not as unitary and rational, and, therefore, as potentially contradictory. I have argued that particular forms of rationality, in relation to 'children's culture' - in particular their play - are produced through, and depend on, particular technologies and practices. I have argued that discursive practices provided subject positions and that the power/knowledge relations which produce subject positions are themselves historically produced and are frequently contradictory. Present memory provides a form of understanding of how we 'hold' the fragments of contradictory desires, wishes, beliefs, attitudes, myths and their practices together. Present memory provides us with a way of understanding the investments that are made in taking-up positions in discourse(s) which confers power and is/are supportive of our sense of self, of be-ing, of our sense of continuity (and desire for immortality), and re-confirms 'identity' as 'masculine' or 'feminine' in socially produced frames of reference.

Within the privileged emblem of children's play, I have argued the existence of an alignment of 'child-centred' education with a normative training of the population. I have outlined an alliance of techniques of Christian pastoral care with organisational techniques for the 'optimisation' of large social groups. Within the designated space of the school and



its purpose-built 'playground', designed to simulate the unfettered life of the streets, children, and their play practices, were to be enmeshed within the corrective force of unobtrusive norms. With the emergence of a new 'child-centred' pedagogy organised around the 'sympathetic' relation between the individual child and teacher, the new social norms could be individuated 'voluntarily' as conscience. The centrality of play in children's lives, and in education, was postulated precisely because it was constructed as a space of regulated freedom in which each child, following Stow, could manifest 'true character and dispositions'. I have argued that normative social training and a 'child-centred' pedagogy are not oppositional, rather, indicative of reciprocating tactics of a single pedagogical strategy.

I have also argued that the changes to children's play practices occurred in concert with other overlapping changes plotted on a topographical grid of cross-referencing norms, 'social problems' and corrective strategies. This overlapping threw a grid of surveillance over adults, as well, which resulted in a re-alignment of the network of power relations operating in, and through, families. The so-called 'liberalising' of 'the family' was to occur within and without; within the family and in relations between families and the state.

In Chapter Two I delineated the ways the power relations of family members were actively re-positioned. The juridically absolute power of the father was softened in favour of the mother and child. The meaning and significance of childhood was transformed with the introduction and extension of compulsory schooling. The privileging of 'mother' and her child-rearing role transmogrified 'woman' as sign within 'nature'/'nurture' mythologemes. The 'capacity' for motherhood was to be augmented and re-formed within pedagogic and governmental strategies underwritten by/in the efficient normalisation of a population. 'Scientific rationalism' underpinned the emergence of the new construct 'housewife' - 'the efficient' guardian of a sanitised haven. The First World War and the Depression served to re-inforce the sacralisation of 'motherhood', even though the dominant mythologemes were re-worked in frequently contradictory ways.

In Section One I sought to detail and signify that the discourses informing any practice are not all of one piece, without seams and ruptures, but that discourses and their practices are taken up precisely because there are many discourses and interests which appear to be solved by the introduction of the new practice. The changing play practices of children is to be read in such a register. The individualised child-centred pedagogy of the new, 'efficient', 'rational' and 'hygienic' home, along with the individualised child-centred pedagogy of the compulsory school, satisfied those concerned with juvenile crime - threads which I analysed in Sections Two and Sections Three. It also satisfied concerns with psychoanalysis, with freedom and 'order' - which I discussed in Section Two, Three and Four. This was effected all at the same time and in different and contradictory ways. Interwoven throughout the thesis is my belief that disciplinary power does not function through overt repression but through the covert re-production of ourselves. Children's culture, their play rhymes, games, toys, songs and so forth is much more contradictory than suggested by theories of 'reproduction' which assume a linear or determinate relation between economy and familialism or economy and schooling, which underplays them as sites of productivity, of children's culture, in their own right.

This thesis has asserted that children's culture is problematic and is an historical production and, as such, is never static. It is continuously open to active re-constructions and transformations. While continuities are not denied, the knowledges within which children's culture is posited, that is, taken to be, are transformed. Through re-constructed memory I have sought to detail that not just knowledges are transformed, but desires, too. The investments individuals make in taking-up multiple subject positionings allows for speculation about how particular discourses set parameters through which desire is produced, regulated and channelled. This thesis has posited that desire is an historical construction, that the content of desires has historical specificity. Section Four has signposted the need for further investigations of the register of desires and received wisdom, culturally-based beliefs, folklore and narrative structure - all of which historically contribute to our definitions of the self, of be-ing, of 'I'. This thesis has argued that power and desire are always/already simultaneously produced in psychical,

semiotic and material domains. In transcending dualism one has to first, acknowledge and second, understand the interplay of signification active in power-desire relations, which are produced through gender differentiated discourses.

In calling on the works of de Saussure and of Barthes in semiotics, on Foucault and Derrida in the historical construction and production of knowledge and discourse, and on the works of Lacan in his ex-centring of the subject and his historical construction of desires, and on Freud's theory of the psyche, I have been concerned to challenge and rupture the notion of a 'rational, unified being'. I have argued in this thesis that it is inadequate to speak of a specific subject's behaviour and attitudes or ascribe in advance a subject's positioning according to class or gender, because we are all the effects of a production, of inscription and ascription which is enmeshed in a mutually-constitutive web of social practices and discourses and subjectivity. As 'boys', 'fathers', 'wives', 'mothers', 'girls', 'schoolchild', 'student', 'consumer' or so forth we experience and inhabit multiple positionings corresponding to a multiplicity of subjectivities and are intricately in the different power relations attendant in the different subject positions. Such differences are not to be contained within a 'unity' myth.

This thesis has illustrated that 'childhood culture' was not solely constructed by various state agencies. Children's play was encompassed within, and by, a broad and contradictory range of peoples, both individuals and groups, who remained outside the 'formal' sphere of the state. Negotiations, mediations and agency were calibrated along with other, frequently contradictory, 'initiatives'. Some of the groups I have referred to were The Playground Association, The School for Mothers, the Our Boy's Institute and philanthropic groups, such as the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Some of the individuals I have referred to were men like Bertram Hawker and women like Lillian de Lissa, and, of course, parents and children themselves. In re-constructed memory, the active role taken by parents and children in the re-definition of 'childhood' and of 'play' has been analysed.

Yet, the massive re-ordering of children's lives, and familial relationships, which occurred with the emergence of compulsory schooling is not to be de-centred. For it is

within the moralising space of the school and the playground that normative pedagogies of play laid the path of socio-cultural amelioration. 'Play' as both concept and dynamic process was shaped and re-shaped, formulated and re-formulated as a cultural artefact and a socio-historical construct.

The inextricable interweaving and inter-actions of language, power, knowledge, desire and subjectivity forged in lived experience - either past or present - allows cultural forms and rituals to be used to express disruptive desire, both the desire repressed by a Symbolic Order and the Law as such, and the desire for change. I have argued that this 'space' between silence and speech, a 'landscape' in which desire almost finds articulation (I would posit that this can be termed 'inner speech') must be acknowledged and researched, as its imagery, its metaphors, its gestures and its mythologemes can provide a basis for the change of, and transcendence of, the patriarchal symbolic. This thesis has posited that the problems, contradictions and irreconcilable demands made by the acquisition of sexual 'identity', family structures and historical conditions surface in collectively held anxieties, obsessions and desires - the shared, social dimension of the unconscious which erupts in our culture in myriad shapes and forms, from folk tales, to symbols and myths. Maintaining heterogeneity within the symbolic, through a rigorous scrutiny and re-evaluation of our symbols and myths, is a necessary task for historians.

Yet, amongst many historians there is a distrust of the analogy between 'history' and 'memory'. History is supposed to be 'hard work', 'serious' and 'objective', while 'memory' is supposed to be 'passive', 'non-inferential' and 'unverified'. This thesis has posited that without recourse to memory 'history' would not only be blind, but mute. To the men and women I interviewed for this thesis, 'myth' and 'memory', 'fact' and 'fantasy', 'past' and 'present' were/are crucial, dynamic processes and constructs which inform(ed) their 'meaning making', that is, their sense of be-ing and also their sense of what could be said and what could be done. Following the Dodo and Humpty Dumpty, what 'I' can sight, what 'I' can say, what 'I' can do, and what 'I' can be is constructed and re-constructed in multiple sites and informs who I/we is/are. There is no single history,

there is no single telling of a single self - there are multiple histories and multiple selves. Which narrative we choose to privilege, at any given historical moment, is yet another 'story', another 'telling'. I have chosen only one of the many possible narratives. It is neither the 'whole' story nor the only story.

The processes of re-memorisation reveal that historians cannot claim current versions of the whole story nor the only story. Narratives are multiple, life histories are multiple. In the re-counting of dreams, through play, and in the myths of our culture, narrative structure is discernible in a wide range of human activities and endeavours. If memory, like narrative, can be conceived of as allowing change without closure then the terrain of the psycho-analytic must be re-conceptualised. Only then will we be able to posit that we will come to the 'end' of this narrative together, or, perhaps, even to its 'beginning', living, as we do, in the 'middle'.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

## APPENDIX A

### INTERVIEWS

#### INTRODUCTION

This appendix contains an outline of the procedures and forms used in setting up, and formalising, interviews for this thesis, a summary of biographical data on each interviewee, the 'focus' points and interview 'schedules', and a sample transcript of an interview.

The procedure and forms are presented because I believe that interviewing is not a matter of 'shoving a microphone in someone's face', and, as such, release forms et cetera are essential if interviews are to be a joint, ethical exercise. The full schedule of questions is included, even though a 'focus' sheet only was brought to the interviews, to indicate the depth of preparation needed for interviews. The biographical data, and brief interview summaries, are presented as an indication of the range of childhood experiences 'represented' by the interviewees. The transcript was not selected because I thought it was of more interest than the others. Rather, it, like all of the interviews, demonstrates that reconstructed memory is a joint re-telling of past and present experiences, a shared making of histories, and the transcript reflects the difficulties and 'joys' of such an enterprise.

Originals and/or copies of all forms and transcripts are held jointly by me and the interviewees. In the majority of cases, copies of the tape are also held by the interviewees. Some interviewees preferred to have a copy of the transcripts only. It is expected that all transcripts will eventually be lodged in the Mortlock Library of South Australia.



**APPENDIX A****INTERVIEW FORMAT****A) LETTER OF INTRODUCTION RE THESIS PROPOSAL**

Thesis Proposal re: Oral History Interviews

As part of my research into children's lives during the early decades of this century, in South Australia, I am particularly keen to interview men and women born in South Australia during the years 1890 to 1939.

If, after my initial visit, you are willing to allow me to tape your childhood reminiscences, you would be involved in two interviews of approximately two to three hours per session, which would be spaced a week apart. Obviously, I would be guided by your time schedule.

The first interview would focus on the area you remember best as a small child, your house(s), your family routines, holidays, celebrations of Christmas, Easter, birthdays et cetera, as well as your weekend activities and routines.

The second interview concentrates more narrowly on your school activities, particularly the games you played, your friends and your play activities. Your play activities at home and in your neighbourhood are also focussed upon - particularly, what tricks you got up to! The second interview may finish with reminiscences of any changes you think have occurred since your childhood days.

You will, of course, receive a copy of the transcript before you are asked to sign a 'conditions of use' form. I will leave a copy of this form for you to examine.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Peters.

**B) QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW 1****SECTION I**

## TOPIC 1 - HOUSEHOLD OF ORIGIN

Interview number/date: .....

Respondent's name: .....

Present address: .....

Marital Status:                      Married  
     Widowed  
     ..... Divorced or separated  
     ..... Never Married

If married, year of marriage: .....

If children, details of birth/sex-order/number: ....

1. When and where were you born?
2. How long did you live in the house where you were born?
3. How many houses did you live in between the ages of 0-12? or until leaving school?
4. What was your birth position in the family?
5. How many brothers and sisters did you have?  
 ..... (dates, sex order, names, places of birth)
6. Were there any other household members?  
 If yes, who?  
 Length of time?
7. How old was your father when you were born?
8. Where and when was he born?
9. How many brothers and sisters did he have?  
 (dates, sex order, names, places of birth)
10. Did he go to school?

11. At what age did he marry?
12. What was his main occupation(s)?
  - regular full-time/occasional full-time;
  - regular part-time/occasional part-time;
13. Did he have any other jobs?
14. Where did he work?
15. Was he ever unemployed?
16. How old was your mother when you were born?
17. Where was she born? When?
18. How many brothers and sisters did she have?  
(dates, sex order, names, places of birth)
19. Did she go to school?  
(If so, where, when, length?)
20. What was her occupation before she married?
21. Did she work outside the house after she was married?
  - regular full-time/occasional full-time;
  - regular part-time/occasional part-time;
22. If your mother worked when she had children, who cared for you?
23. In the area you lived in longest when you were a child, what 'social class' do you think most people belonged to?

### **C) SECTION II : HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY**

#### **TOPIC II. HOUSEHOLD AND DOMESTIC ROUTINE**

1. Can you describe the house you remember best when you were a child?

2. How big was your house?
3. How many bedrooms did it have?  
How were these arranged?
4. What other rooms were there?
5. Was your house owned or rented?
6. What rooms did you live in?
7. Were there any rooms you were not allowed to go into, except on special occasions?
8. What kind of lighting was there?  
When do you remember having electric light?
9. Can you describe the furniture?  
What sort of floor coverings did the house have?
10. Where and how was the cooking done?
11. Who did the cooking?
12. Did your mother have anyone to help in the house?  
(Daily or irregular help? Servants? Nature of relationship and duties?)
13. When your mother was sick who did her work?
14. Did you have specific tasks to do?  
- If so, what? And at what age?  
- Did you agree/disagree with how much and what kind of work you had to do?
15. What tasks were done by other members of the family?  
- Father .....

- Brother(s)..... At what age?
  - Sister(s) ..... At what age?
16. Was there any pattern or attempt at regulation to house-hold work?
  17. Where and how was the washing done?
  18. How, and by whom, was it dried and ironed?
  19. Did you have a bathroom?
  20. What type of toilet did you have?
  21. How was the household rubbish disposed?
  22. Who was 'in charge' of your house?  
Of what was she/he/they 'in charge'?
  23. Did your mother and father agree/disagree about how much work each of them did for the children?
    - Did this change over time?
  24. What household tasks did your mother most like/dislike?  
Why?
  25. What household tasks did your father most like/dislike?

### TOPIC III. MEALS, SHOPPING AND THE BARTER ECONOMY

1. How many meals did you eat a day and what were they called?
  - At what times of the day were these meals eaten?
  - Which was the main meal of the day? - noon/evening?
2. In what room(s) in the house did you have these meals?
3. Who would be present?
  - Did all the family sit at the table for meals?

4. Who cooked these meals?
5. Did you eat much fish/meat/rabbit?  
- How many times a week did you eat meat?
6. What did you usually eat in the morning/at noon/ in the evening?  
- Did you have sweets or pudding every day?
7. Did your mother or father bake bread? Preserve fruit, jam, pickles, and so on?
8. Did your family buy or grow fruit/vegetables?
9. Was any livestock retained for family use?  
- If so, who maintained them?
10. Did you have different food on different days?
11. Who was given larger servings of food?  
- What amount was given to whom?
12. Were you allowed to talk during meals?  
- What was usually discussed?
13. Did you have a choice as to how much of the meal you could eat?
14. When could you leave the table?
15. What deliveries did you have to the house?  
(bread, milk, meat, clothes, medicine?)
16. Who did the shopping in your house?  
- Where? For what? How often?
17. Did the shops give credit?
18. Did your mother/father ever use credit?

19. Did your parents ever swap vegetables or other commodities with the neighbours?
  - If so, what did they receive in return?
20. What sort of flowers were grown in your garden?
21. Were your clothes bought or made at home?
  - If made, by whom?
22. Who mended the clothes? Shoes?
23. Did you have special clothes for Sunday and holidays?
  - For girls?
  - For boys?
24. Who made the financial decisions in your family?
  - Who decided how much was spent on clothing, food, et cetera?

#### TOPIC IV. HEALTH CARE

1. Were you born at home or in a hospital?
2. Were your brothers/sisters born at home or in a hospital?
3. Who delivered you/them?
4. If delivered by a midwife, can you remember any family stories concerning the midwife?
5. Did your mother feed her babies herself?
  - If not, how were you/they fed?
6. Were you a healthy family?
  - Was your mother 'fussy' about hygiene?
7. How often would you have seen a doctor?

8. Where and to which doctor did you go?
9. Did the doctor come to the house?  
- What was the means of transportation?
10. Were any financial arrangements made by the family for illness?
11. Were you or other family members ever ill at home?  
- What illness, and what arrangements were made?
12. Did anyone help your family at times of illness?
13. Were you ever vaccinated? Sisters/Brothers?
14. Did you ever visit a hospital?
15. Do you remember a death and funeral in the family?  
- If so, describe what happened.
16. Did your family have any special remedies for illness?

#### **D) SECTION III. HOUSEHOLD RELATIONS**

##### TOPIC V. HOUSEHOLD LEISURE ACTIVITIES

1. Did your mother have any spare time after her work was completed?  
- How did she spend it?
2. Did your mother ever go out to enjoy herself without your father and the children?  
- If so, where/with whom/to whom?
3. Did your mother have any interests outside the home?
4. How did your father spend his leisure time?



5. How often did your father go out without your mother and the children?
  - How much was he home at weekends?
6. Did you spend a lot of time visiting friends/neighbours/relatives?
  - Casually or by invitation?
7. Did your relatives/friends/neighbours visit you?
  - Who, How often?
  - Casually or by invitation?
8. How did you spend Saturdays and Sundays?
9. Did you/your parents attend a Church?
  - If so, which one and how often?
10. Did you attend Sunday School?
  - If so, how often and what activities were supplied?
  - Did you go because your parents told you or because you wanted to?
11. How important was religion in your home?  
Was religion important to you as a child?
12. Were you aware of any antagonism between different religious groups?
13. Did you play games on Sundays?
  - What was your parents' attitude?
14. How was Christmas celebrated?  
[John Martins Christmas Pageant 1933 and John Martins Magic Cave prior to 1933.]
15. How were birthdays celebrated?
16. What were the most important days in your household?

(E.g. Christmas, Easter, New Year, birthdays, anniversaries, 24th May, Empire Day? Guy Fawkes night? Eight Hour Day? Mothers Day, Proclamation Day (28th Dec)?

17. Did you attend any weddings or funerals?
  - Other celebrations?
18. Did you have any musical instruments in the home?
  - Did you learn to play?
19. Did you have family song nights?
20. Were their books in the house? Magazines? (e.g. The New Idea Everylady's Journal? Newspapers? (The Register, The Chronicle, Church Papers)
21. Did your parents read to you?
  - Did they read aloud/to each other/at all?
22. Did anyone in the family belong to a library?
23. Did your mother use magazines/books as aids to home-management, or child-rearing?
24. When did you first visit, and with whom did you go,
  - agricultural show, art gallery, museum, opera, play, pictures, vaudeville, boxing, Henley-on-the-Torrens, Circus?
25. Did your parents play games with you?
  - If so, what?

#### TOPIC VI. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS

1. Did your parents consider they belonged to a class?
  - Which one?
2. Did you ever know the income of your mother/father?

- Did you ever feel your parents had to struggle to "make-ends-meet"?

3. Was there any inherited money in your family?
4. Was your house/area/'suburb' considered to be good?
5. Did you know anyone in the area from a different social class?
6. Were there any areas/streets in the regions classified as better or worse than others?
7. Which political party did your mother/father vote for?
  - Did they ever discuss politics with you?
  - If so, did you know their reasons for voting that way?
8. Did they hold any party positions?
9. Do you know what/who influenced them in politics?
10. Was there any discussion about women voting?
11. Did your mother or father express ideas about women's involvement in the world outside the home?
12. Did your parents view politics as a domestic or international matter?

#### TOPIC VII : RELATIONS WITH PARENTS

1. Did your parents show affection for each other in front of you as children?
2. Did your mother/father show affection towards you?
  - How much and in what ways?
3. Did you feel close to your mother/father when you were a young child?

- Could you talk easily to your mother/father?
- 4. Did your mother/father seem closer to a particular child in your family?
  - Why? (Boys/girls)
- 5. If your parents had a disagreement were you children aware of it?
  - Did your brothers/sisters ever get involved in these disagreements?
- 6. Did you have anything you couldn't talk about to your mother/father?
- 7. How did your parents expect you to behave towards them?
- 8. Did you feel your parents had things they did not talk about to you/tell you?
- 9. When adults were talking, were you allowed to join in?
- 10. If you did something naughty were you punished?
  - How? By whom? At what age?
  - What type of things made your mother/father angry?
- 11. Were boys in the family punished any different from girls?
  - How? By whom? At what age?
- 12. How did you feel about being punished?
- 13. Were older children expected to keep the younger ones "in-line"?
  - Boys? Girls?
- 14. Were older children allowed to punish younger ones?
  - How? Boys? Girls?
- 15. What kind of person do you think your parents wanted you

to be when you grew up?

16. What kind of people did your parents want your brother(s)/ sister(s) to be?
17. Was any other grown-up an important influence on you?
18. Would you say your parents were equally important in teaching you how to behave, or was one more important than the other?

#### **E) SECTION IV : SCHOOLING**

##### TOPIC VIII. SCHOOL ROUTINES AND ACTIVITIES

1. Did you go to kindergarten?
  - What was the name and address of your primary school?
  - At what age did you go to school?
  - Where did your brothers and sisters attend school?
2. Did you have lessons at home?
  - Why?
3. How did you get to school?
4. Did you like school?
  - Describe your school building(s), routines, size of classes, how often you attended, who habitually truanted and why, and so on.
5. Were the classrooms cold in winter?
  - Did you have any form of heating?
6. What were the school textbooks which you used like?
7. Were you right or left-handed?

8. Did your parents show an interest in your school work?
9. Who helped you with your homework?
10. Did you receive corporal punishment at school?
  - Who administered it?
11. Was your primary school co-educational?
  - What were the names of your teachers?
12. What are your memories of Empire Day at school?  
(Other days of significance?)
13. What kinds of social activities did you have at school?
  - e.g. concerts, picnics, swimming...?
14. Did you learn to play an instrument at school?  
Did you have extra tuition of any kind?
15. Did you have lunch at school?
  - What food did you eat at school/drink?
  - Who looked after you if you were unwell at school?
16. What did you wear to school?
  - Who made/bought your schooling clothes?
17. Where did you get your hair cut?
18. What were your favourite/least favourite lessons?
  - Were all lessons the same for boys/girls?  
e.g. needlework.
19. While you were at school, did you have a part-time job, or earn any money at all?
  - If so, what happened to the money?
20. At what age and grade level did you finish school?
  - Why?

**F) SECTION V : PLAY**

## TOPIC IX : ACTIVITIES AT SCHOOL

1. Can you describe your school's playground?
2. When, and with whom, did you play in the playground?
3. Can you remember any playground rhymes? Chants?, Taunts?, Insults?
  - Skipping, rhymes, hand-clapping rhymes, ball bouncing rhymes?
4. What were the names of the games you played and describe how you played these games?
5. Which games were played according to the seasons?
  - Who informed you as to when you could play these games? (e.g. marbles in, tops out).
6. What play objects did you bring to school? (e.g. tops, skipping rope)?
7. Did the teacher(s) supervise your playground games? Did he/she/they ever join in your games?
8. Which games did the teachers not allow you to play?
9. What games were you considered too young/old for?
  - By whom? Why?
10. Did you learn any rhymes in class? (Out of Class?) Riddles?
  - Can you recite any?
11. Did you recite poetry at school?
  - Can you remember any?
12. What stories did the teachers read to you? Tell to you?

13. Were there any toys at school? Board games? Puzzles?...  
If so, describe them.
14. Did you ever bring toys to school? e.g. dolls, trains...
15. Did you collect autographs/have an autograph book at school?  
- If so, can you remember who wrote (and examples) in your album?  
Who read your autograph book?  
(e.g. Life is mainly froth and bubble....)
16. Did you sing songs in class? In the playground?  
- Examples?
17. Do you remember any popular jokes which circulated in class/  
In the playground?
18. When you played by yourself what did you do?
19. Were there any organised sports at your school?  
(e.g. cricket, hockey, boxing, tennis, et cetera?)  
- If so, who played and where? Describe the clothing worn.
20. Did your school organize inter-school sporting matches/  
competitions?
21. Did your school have drill exercises? Rhythmic exercises?  
Physical Culture?  
- If so, describe the routines.

### **G) SECTION V : LEISURE ACTIVITIES**

#### TOPIC X. TIME SPENT OUT OF SCHOOL

1. Did you have time to play before you travelled to school?  
- If so, what did you play and with whom? Where did you play? e.g. river, street, front-yard?



2. Were there any places you were frightened to play?
3. Did you have money to spend on the way to school?  
- If so, what did you buy?
4. When school dismissed in the afternoon did you go straight home?  
- If not, describe what you did?
5. Were there any places that your teachers or parents forbade you from playing on the way home? Why?
6. Were there any children with whom you were forbidden or discouraged from playing?  
- If so, why?
7. Were you allowed to play at other childrens homes? If so,  
- What games did you play? Were you supervised? e.g. older brother/sister, parent?
8. What games did you play at your own home by yourself?  
- With your brothers? Sisters?  
Where did you play? Were you supervised?
9. Were you allowed to bring toys or games to the meal table?
10. Do you remember your first toy?  
- If so, who gave it to you?
11. What were your favourite toys?  
- Your brothers' favourite toys? Your sisters' favourite toys? - If baby in the house what toys did he/she have?
12. Did you share your toys with family members? Friends?  
- Where were your toys, games, books kept?
13. Were your toys made or bought?  
- If bought, how were they selected. (e.g. shop, catalogue)

and by whom?

- If made, by whom?

14. Were you given toys/games/books for birthdays/Christmas, and so on?  
- Describe - Did you have a money box?
15. Were your parents given advice as to how you should play?  
- With what you should play? Where you should play?
16. Were you allowed to read comics? Children's newspapers?  
- If so, can you name any?
17. What books did you read at home?  
- Where did the books come from?
18. What hobbies did you have at home?  
e.g. collecting marbles, cigarette cards, stamps, postcards, scrapbooks, dolls, toy soldiers, steam engines, hair-ribbons, flowers, letter writing and so on.
19. What hobbies did your brothers/sisters/friends have?
20. Did you do handcrafts at home?  
e.g. sewing, cookery, woodwork, sketching.  
If so, were you supervised?  
- Did you ever exhibit your work in competitions?
21. Did you garden at home?  
- Did you have any pets?
22. Describe the clothes in which you were allowed to play.
23. Can you describe a typical weekend in your home when you were school-aged? (i.e. Under 14 years).

#### TOPIC XI. SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

1. Did you go away for holidays?

- If so, where?
- 2. Did you go to Church sponsored activities?  
e.g. picnics, dances, fund-raising concerts?
- 3. Did you go to picnic race meetings?  
- If so, describe.
- 4. How old were you when you first swam at the beach?  
- What did you wear? What did you play with?
- 5. How old were you when you saw your first circus?  
Describe it.
- 6. What family outings did you attend?  
e.g. picnics, dances, football matches, et cetera.  
- Describe.
- 7. Did you attend any sporting fixtures?  
- If so, with whom?
- 8. Were your parents involved in any sporting activities?  
- If so, describe.
- 9. Did you have friends and/or relatives to stay?  
- If so, how were they entertained?
- 10. What kind of social life did you and your parents have?  
(When you were aged under 14 years).
- 11. Were your sisters/brothers allowed to go to places to which  
you could not?  
- If so, why?
- 12. What outings were you not allowed to have/attend?  
Why? (Aged 14 and under).

13. Do you believe girls and boys played the same/differently?  
- Why?

#### H) SECTION VII : OWN CHILDREN AND THEIR PLAY

##### TOPIC XII. CHILDREARING

1. As a parent did you try to be like your own parents?  
- Were your child(ren) born at home or in a hospital?
2. Was your mother alive when you were bringing up your child/children?
3. How often did you see her?
4. Was your mother-in-law alive when you were rearing your child/children?  
- How often did you see her?
5. Did you and your wife/husband have similar ideas on rearing your children?
6. What makes a good mother/father?
7. What did you rear your child/children to believe were important in life?
8. Did this differ from the emphasis your parents stressed with you?
9. Could you give or do things for your child/children that your parents were unable to do for you?
10. Were your parents able to give or do things for your children you were unable to?
11. Was/Were your child/children able to join in your discussions?

12. How was/were your child/children disciplined?
  - By whom?
13. Who set behaviour standards for the children?
14. Did your child/children look to anyone else for guidance?
15. Did you believe girls should be treated the same way as boys?
  - How did your boy(s) treat their sister(s)?
16. Did you believe boys should be treated the same way as girls?
  - How did your girl(s) treat their brother(s)?
17. How were the girls/boys treated by their brothers/sisters friends?
18. Were your children 'happy' at school?
  - Which school did they attend?
  - Kindergarten?
  - At what age did they leave school?
  - Why?

#### TOPIC XIII. LEISURE AND PLAY ACTIVITIES

1. Do you remember your child's/children's first toy(s)?
  - If so, describe.
2. Did you buy and/or make their toys?
  - If so, describe. e.g. bought from store catalogue.
  - Why did you select certain toys? From whom did you seek advice?
3. What were their favourite toys?
  - Did your children have a money box?
4. What games did your child(ren) play? Boys? Girls?
  - Describe.
  - Were there any games your children were not allowed to

play?

5. Where did your child(ren) play?
  - With whom?
6. Did you or your husband/wife play games with them?
  - What did you play?
7. Did you read/tell stories to your children? Sing songs?
  - Do you remember the titles of any stories? Songs?
  - Did you have any musical instruments in the house?
  - If so, who played what?
8. Did you recite nursery rhymes and/or poetry to your children?
  - Examples?
  - Do you remember any rhymes your children were punished for repeating?
9. Did you have a radio?
  - What programmes did your child(ren) listen to?Did you have a telephone?
  - Who used it?
10. Did your children (under 14 years) play organized sport?
  - What? And with whom?
11. Did you go on holidays with your family?
  - If so, where to? Describe what your child(ren) did on holidays?
12. What social gatherings did you attend and with whom?  
e.g. by self? For enjoyment or obligation?
13. What was a typical weekend routine in your home when you had children aged under 14?
  - Saturday? Sunday (e.g. Church) Meal times?
14. Was religion important to your family?

e.g. did your children go to Sunday School?

Did you teach them any prayers? Do you recall any?

15. What hobbies did your children have?
16. What amusements did you accompany your children to?  
e.g. Museum, Zoological Gardens, Agricultural Show et cetera.
17. What 'pets' did your family keep?
18. What gifts did your children receive at Christmas? For birthdays? et cetera.  
- Did you children have birthday parties?  
If so, what games did they play?
19. Was there a children's playground near your house?
20. Did your children bring friends home to play?  
- Did they visit other children's houses to play?
21. Did you ever forbid them to play with anyone?  
- If so, why?
22. Were your children able to buy comics, books, toys, games, et cetera?  
- If so, from where did the money come? And from whom did they buy them?
23. Did your children belong to any organizations, such as Boy Scouts, Girl Guides et cetera?
24. Did you visit the movies with your children? Can you remember any films you saw?
25. Did your children's school provide you with any written advice about 'bringing up' your child/ren'. e.g. toys to buy, games to play...?

26. Did you take advice from other sources in relation to 'bringing up' your children? e.g. newspapers/magazines? Teachers...?

I would like you to consider one last question...

- What do you consider were the most important changes affecting the way children played over the period of three generations that we have been talking about - your parent's time, your childhood and your children's childhood?

**I) CONDITIONS OF USE FORM FOR ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW**

M.P. Peters,  
Department of Education,  
The University of Adelaide.

**CONDITIONS OF USE FORM FOR ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW**

(Please strike out irrelevant parts)

I, ..... give my permission to Margaret Peters to use this interview, recorded on ..... by Margaret Peters for the purpose of research for, and publication of, her doctoral thesis on children in South Australia, circa 1890s to 1939. I also give permission to Margaret Peters to retain a copy of this interview for future use by other bona fide researchers.

Signature(s) .....

Address .....

Dated .....

Interviewer .....



**FOCUS POINTS****INTERVIEW ONE**

1. Biographical data.
2. Household and Domestic Routines.
3. Parent's roles, interaction.
4. Household economy.
5. Health and hygiene matters.
6. Friendship network.
7. Neighbours.
8. Family festivities, celebrations, rites and rituals.
9. Family leisure time.
10. Political allegiances.
11. Attitude to siblings and parents.
12. Parental expectations of you.

**FOCUS POINTS****INTERVIEW TWO**

1. Kindergarten experience.
2. Attitudes to schools and schooling.
3. Teachers and routines.
4. Schoolfriends.
5. The Playground.
6. Games and activities ... at school.  
at home.  
at friends places.
7. Special celebrations, e.g. Arbor Day, School Picnics.
8. Hobbies, collections, toys.
9. Organized sporting activities.
- 10 'Cultural' activities.
11. Attitudes as a parent to child/ren's play activities.
12. Perception of changing childhood(s).

## THE INTERVIEWEES

The following information is collated according to the order and year of interview.

**OHI 1/82 Francis Joseph NOONAN - b. 5/9/01, d. 6/10/84. Aged 80 years at the time of his interviews, which were held at his East Glenelg residence on the 3rd and 7th of August, 1982.**

Frank Noonan was born at 'Glenmore', the farming property of his parents, Peter Noonan and Lydia Noonan (née Newman) which was situated in the Belalie District, 9 kilometres north from Jamestown, in the mid north of South Australia. His father, Peter Joseph Noonan, was born at St. John's, near Kapunda, on the 24/6/1870, the 3rd son of John Noonan and Bridget Hynes. He was educated at Gulnare, then, by the Jesuits at Sevenhill, near Clare, and at Christian Brothers College, Wakefield Street, Adelaide. Lydia Noonan née Newman, was born at Bathurst, N.S.W., in 1871, the elder daughter of William Henry Newman and Hannah Cramp. She was educated at the Good Samaritan Convent, Woolongong, N.S.W and was a governess in the mid-north of South Australia, prior to her marriage. The eldest of six children, Gertrude, b. 1903, Kathleen b. 1905, John (Jack) b. 1908, Minnie, b. 1912 and Agnes (Bub) b. 1915, Frank was educated at St. Joseph's Convent, Jamestown, and Christian Brothers College, Wakefield Street, Adelaide. He interrupted his studies in 1917 to return to his parents farm due to the shortage of 'manpower' as a result of the Great War. Francis married Elizabeth Slattery, in Jamestown, in 1926 and farmed his parents' property. In 1928, his only child, Patricia, was born at the Jamestown Hospital. In the aftermath of the Depression he moved to Whyalla in 1939 and worked for BHP at the Whyalla shipworks. In 1953 he and his wife moved to Adelaide where they first resided at Woodville, then East Glenelg.

The interviews were free of any technical difficulties and were conducted in his 'sunroom'. Frank was a clear and lucid interviewee who provided many humorous anecdotes about his school days, in particular, and Jamestown, in general.

Length of Interview: 3 hours and 46 minutes.

OHI 2/86 Elizabeth NOONAN (née Slattery) b. 9/8/1900. Aged 85 years at the time of the interviews at her daughter's East Glenelg residence, on the 24th of August and the 1st of September, 1986.

Elizabeth Noonan was born at "Hornsdale", in the mid-north of South Australia, on her parents farming and grazing property, the third child of Michael Slattery and Kathleen Slattery (née O'Brien). Hornsdale is approximately 12 kilometres north of Caltowie. Michael Slattery was born in 1861 at Kapunda, one of seven children. He was educated at the St. Joseph's convent at Kapunda. His wife, Kathleen O'Brien, was born at Tottles Creek in 1893, one of nine children, she also was educated at Kapunda, at St. Joseph's Convent. She lived on her parents' farm until her marriage. With her brothers, Michael b. 1896 at Tottles Creek and John (Jack) b. 1902 in Jamestown and her sister Margaret b. 1898 at Tottles Creek, she first attended Hornsdale State school, from which, at the age of nine years, she was sent as a weekly boarder to the Convent of the Sisters of St. Joseph at Caltowie. Her brothers attended Sacred Heart College at Somerton Park, Adelaide. Suffering from diphtheria at the age of 12, Elizabeth ceased schooling and stayed on her parents farming and grazing property until her marriage on the 27th of June, 1926, to Frances Noonan, a farmer. The mother of a daughter, Patricia, born on the 8th of December, 1928<sup>1928</sup>, at Jamestown, Elizabeth laboured long and hard on her parents-in-law's farm which provided a living for two families. This was a marked contrast to her childhood where 'live-in help' had always been provided for her mother.

Elizabeth was a reticent interviewee at first, uncomfortable with talking about herself and her childhood. However, she soon involved herself in detailed reminiscences about life on a farm where 'you made your own fun' and was particularly informative about her experiences as a weekly boarder in a Catholic girls' boarding school.

Length of interview: 5 hours and 24 minutes.

**OHI 3/88 Eileen Lydia O'LOUGHLIN b. 29/10/01 d. 7/11/91, and (her brother) Walter (Wally) O'LOUGHLIN b. 5/12/04 d. 27/8/90. Aged 86 years and 83 years, respectively, at the time of the interviews held on the 30th March and 6th April, 1988 at their Glenelg South residence.**

Eileen and Walter were born near Caltowie in the mid-north of South Australia, on their parent's farm. Eileen is the eldest of eight children - Michael b. 1903 in Caltowie; Walter b. 1904 in Caltowie; William b. 1906 in Jamestown; Frances b. 1908 in Parakee; John b. 1911 in Adelaide, Doreen (Dolly) b. 1913 in Adelaide; and George b. 1915 in Port Pirie. Her parents, Patrick O'Loughlin, b. 1870 in Virginia, South Australia, a farmer, and Minnie O'Loughlin (née Newman), b. 1873 in Bathurst, N.S.W., were educated at St. Joseph's Convent in Caltowie and at the Good Samaritan Convent, Woolongong, N.S.W. respectively. Mrs. O'Loughlin, the younger daughter of Eileen William Henry Newman, a journalist, and Hannah Cramp, the daughter of a medical doctor, received an extensive fourteen years education which included languages, music and painting. As she had been orphaned, as a young child, she accepted employment on leaving the boarding school as a governess in South Australia's mid-north where she subsequently met and married Patrick O'Loughlin.

Eileen attended three schools, Cabra Dominican College at Cumberland Park, Adelaide, St. Joseph's School at Mitcham, and Butlers Bridge Public School in the mid-north, before she left, aged thirteen years, to help her mother on the farm. Eileen has devoted her life to the care of her parents, an invalid sister and two brothers. Never married, Eileen's life epitomizes familial duty and service. She proved to be an excellent source of information about rural and urban childhoods with an excellent recall of past events. However, she dominated the interview as Wally was content to leave most of the talking to her. Interview conditions were good, although the first interview was initially interrupted by unexpected callers.

Length of interview : 5 hours and 9 minutes.

**OHI 4/88 Agnes Cecilia CLARKE (née Burns) b.24/11/03. Aged 84 years at the time of her interviews, which were held at her Glenelg residence on the 20th and 23rd of April, 1988.**

Agnes Clarke was born at Parkside in Adelaide, the elder of two children. Her brother, William, (Bill) was born at home two years, to the day, later on the 24/11/05. Agnes' grandfather lived with the family. Her father, Patrick Burns, was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1871 and emigrated with his family, as a young child, to Adelaide. He was educated at the Dominican Convent, Franklin Street, Adelaide and at the Christian Brothers College, Wakefield Street, Adelaide. A Sales Manager and commercial traveller for the South Australian Farmers Union, Patrick Burns married Jane Green in December 1902. Jane Green was born in Adelaide in 1877. Educated at St. Aloysius' College in Angas Street, Adelaide, Jane Green was the first student from her school to undertake a University examination, which she passed with distinction. After her marriage she was an active community worker, becoming a Justice of the Peace in 1937 and subsequently sitting on the Adoption Court for many years. In the New Year's Honours List of 1954, Mrs Burns was created a Member of the Order of the British Empire.

Agnes was educated at the Convent of Mercy, Glen Osmond Road, Parkside and later won a scholarship to Remington College, a business college in Adelaide, where she studied shorthand, typing and book-keeping. Married in 1928, Agnes has a daughter, Joan who was born in 1933 at Glenelg Private Hospital. Widowed in 1942, Agnes had to work to support herself and her nine year old daughter. She worked in various office jobs, her first with Amscol and her last at the Pier Hotel in Glenelg.

Mrs Clarke was very easy to interview as she is exceptionally articulate and has a retentive memory. Recording conditions were very good.

Length of interview: 5 hours and 58 minutes.

**OHI 5/88 Eileen Emily SAID (née Conlon) b. 3/10/07. Aged 80 years at the time of her interviews which were held at her East Glenelg residence on the 4th and 9th of May, 1988.**

Eileen Said was born in Riverton, in the lower north of South Australia, the seventh, and youngest child of James Frances Conlon and Annie Conlon (née McManus). One of four boys and three girls, there were fourteen years between Bridget, the eldest child, born in 1893, and Eileen. James Conlon was born in Riverton in 1866 and attended the Tarlee school run by the Sisters of St Joseph. He was a dairy farmer at the time of his marriage, at the age of 28 years to Annie McManus, who was born in 1867, on Bendelby Station, near Quorn, in the far-north of South Australia.

Eileen was aged two years when her family moved to pioneer the Murray irrigation settlement of Monteith, which began as a tent settlement. She was educated at the Monteith school and provides a fascinating 'picture' of a close-knit, isolated community which faced great privations and isolation, even though the town of Murray Bridge was 'five miles down the river by boat or seven overland on horseback'.

Eileen trained as a nursing sister. She married in 1953. There are no children from the marriage and Eileen is now a widow. Mrs Said was a most reflective interviewee who evinced a great deal of 'wonder' over the changes in childhood over her life time. Conditions for interviewing were good and free of interruptions.

Length of interview: 5 hours and 11 minutes.

**OHI 6/88 Mary Stella Veronica SLADDIN (née Scales b. 4/2/04. Aged 84 years at the time of the interviews, which were held in her hostel unit, at a Morphettville aged care centre, on the 10th and 19th of May, 1988.**

Veronica Sladdin was born at her home in Clare, in the mid-north of South Australia, the eldest of four children - Anne Elizabeth Florence Scales b. 1905; Mary Dorothy Clover Scales b. 1907, and James Joseph Clare Scales b. 1909. Her father, James Scales, was born in Armagh (near Clare, S.A.) in 1868, the fifth of ten children. He was educated at the

Armagh State school, St. Joseph's Convent Clare and St. Aloysius' College, Sevenhill. A mail contractor on the Clare to Blyth route for 32 years, initially with a coach and four, Mr. Scales also took on veterinary work at the "Wolta Wolta" stud owned by R.E.H. Hope. Married in 1902 to Sarah Ann Naulty, who was born at Black Hill, in South Australia, in 1870, and educated at the Saint Joseph's Convent in Clare, Mr Scales was 'especially close' to his daughter Veronica, who assisted him in the stabling and grooming of his many horses and performed many of the outside chores in her frequently ill mother's absence.

Veronica's interviews were easy to record, despite the frequent interruptions from the Hostel intercom system. A woman of strong conviction, Veronica was a wonderful source of information about her early life in Clare. Married on October 27th, 1927, Mrs Sladdin has two children - a son and a daughter. She is a widow.

Length of Interview: 5 hours and 49 minutes.

**OHI 7/88 William Patrick Burns b. 24/11/05. Aged 82 years at the time of the interview, held at his East Glenelg residence on the 16th August, 1988.**

William (Bill) Burns was born at his parents' residence at Parkside, Adelaide, the second of two children. His parents were Patrick Burns and Jane Green. (Refer to OHI 4/88 for more parental details.)

Bill was educated at the Convent of Mercy, Parkside, in a section of the school set aside for boys. He was a dutiful scholar, but did not like school and left school at the age of 15 years to work in the office of James Bell and Company, wheat merchants in Gilbert Street, Adelaide. His first salary, as an office boy, was 15 shillings per week. Mr. Burns married in 1933. He is the father of three children - William (Bill) b. 1935; Brian b. 1938 and Marie b. 1943.

Mr Burns proved a difficult subject to interview. Despite a preliminary telephone call and interview, and a recommendation and referral from his sister, Agnes Clarke, Mr Burns appeared to have 'second thoughts' during the taping of the first interview. He became



concerned that reminiscences of schoolboy 'fighting' between Catholics and Protestants should not be taped as 'all that is best forgotten'. Mr. Burns then decided that other childhood stories could be kept off the tape and I subsequently decided to 'round off' the interview. Despite my disappointment, what has been recorded has been useful in analysing gendered accounts of childhoods when 'comparing' his memory, of certain family and childhood events, with that of his sister's accounts.

Length of interview: 2 hours and 10 minutes.

**OHI 8/88 Patricia Mary Fitzpatrick (née Noonan) b. 8/12/28. Aged 59 years at the time of the interviews held at her East Glenelg residence on the 18th and 22nd of August, 1988.**

Patricia was born in Jamestown, in the mid-north of South Australia, in the Jamestown Hospital. The only child of Frances Noonan and Elizabeth Noonan (née Slattery), Patricia lived on her parents' farm 'Glenmore' at Belalie, nine kilometres north of Jamestown (Refer to OHI 1/82 and OHI 2/86 for parental details).

At the age of six she boarded with her paternal, then maternal, grandparents in Jamestown, and attended the Sisters of St. Joseph Convent in Jamestown. She returned to the farm at weekends. From necessity, she 'sought out' friends and recalled in great detail the games she played and the importance of 'keeping up with the boys'. Relatively unsupervised by her grandparents, Patricia's childhood had few major restrictions placed upon her.

At the age of 11, she moved with her family to Whyalla, where her father gained employment, in 1939, with BHP. As Patricia recalls, this placed great restrictions on her time and movements as she had to readjust to living full time with her parents. She attended first the public school and then St. John's school, run by the Good Samaritan order of nuns and became more cognisant of religious and class differences. On leaving school at the age of 16, Patricia worked in the office at BHP.

Patricia married at the age of nineteen to Lloyd Fitzpatrick, born in Birchup, Victoria, on the 18/2/26, the son of John Percival Fitzpatrick and Lilla Beasley, and had

two daughters. In 1953 she moved, with her family, to Adelaide to allow her daughters 'more opportunities' and because she did not wish to send them to a boarding school

As the youngest interviewee, Patricia's memories afforded me the opportunity of 'seeing' many changes in childhood routines and celebrations, through her eyes. A reflective and thoughtful woman to interview she offered much insight into changing parental attitudes in the post-Second World War period.

The interview was free of any personal or technical difficulties and provided me with a great deal of detail about the 1930s, in particular.

Length of interview: 5 hours and 38 minutes.

**OHI 9/88 Coralie Green (née Ravenscroft; formerly Johnson) b. 5/7/24. Aged 64 years at the time of the interviews held in her West Beach residence on the 5th and 12th of September, 1988.**

(Refer to sample interview for further details.)

Length of interview: 5 hours and 52 minutes.

**OHI 10/88 Llewellyn Fowler b. 25/3/1893, d.14/11/88. Aged 96 years at the time of the interviews held at his hostel unit in a Rostrevor elderly care centre, on the 16th and 28th of September, 1988.**

Llewellyn was born at Morphetville (near Glenelg) in his parents' house on Sir Thomas Elder's stud farm where his father was employed as 'an expert horseman'. Llewellyn's parents moved houses several times after they lost the use of the Elder 'grace and favour' house - when Llewellyn was 5 years old, his parents moved into a farmhouse at Morphetville but he moved again, at the age of 10, after his mother died in childbirth, after the delivery of her eighth child. Llewellyn attended four schools prior to leaving in 1906 as soon as he turned thirteen years of age. Llewellyn had supported his family with various jobs prior to leaving school. His childhood, as such, was brief. His re-telling is therefore

significant as he epitomises life prior to 'the century of childhood' where extended schooling became the real work of 'the child'.

Length of interview : 3 hours and 11 minutes.

For an extensive analysis of Llewellyn Fowler's life refer to Ian Davey 'Growing Up in South Australia' in Eric Richards (ed.) The Flinders History of South Australia. Social History. Wakefield Press. Netley, 1986.

**OHI 11/88 Adelene Elizabeth VENABLES (née Slape) b. 8/9/13. Aged 75 years at the time of the interviews which were held at her Renown Park home on the 26th of September and the 17th of October, 1988.**

Adelene Venables was born at Bookabie on the West Coast of South Australia. There are few details about her father, an alcoholic, who deserted the family early in Adelene's life. The second of eight children - Florence Ann, the eldest, b. 12/6/11 at Penong; Inman Bewberry b. 25/7/16 at Penong, Thelma Rose b. 18/2/18 at Kent Town, John Christopher in 1922 at Kent Town; Hope b. 15/9/26 at Kent Town; Bengeman (sic) b. 14/2/28 in Gilbert Street, Adelaide; and, William b. 1930 in Gouger Street, Adelaide - Adelene was fostered out to relatives at Mount Gambier at the age of five years. Adelene is unsure as to the identity of her younger siblings' father(s) and was rarely in contact with them or her mother, who worked from her home as a dressmaker. Prior to being fostered she had moved house seven times.

Adelene's information about her parents is very sketchy, although she believes her father was one of five children and that he worked at Port Pirie 'at one time'. Adelene's mother was born 'either at Ceduna or Penong about 1893 or 1894' and was one of six children. She was employed as a dressmaker prior to her marriage and after attending school at Ceduna.

Adelene recalls a childhood lived with a 'strict Aunt and Uncle' where birthdays were not celebrated nor brought to her attention, where friends were not encouraged to call and where 'family' interaction was minimal. As a consequence, school loomed large in Adelene's

life. Adelene married in 1934 and has a son and a daughter. Mrs Venables spent most of her married life at Iron Knob prior to moving to Adelaide.

Mrs Venables was not easy to interview in that she was quite obviously telling only parts of her 'life story' and consequently shaped and reshaped events at will. While all of the interviews were subconsciously involved in such memorization processes, Adelene resisted any overt encouragement to verbalise her diffidence in sharing the very early years of her life.

As such, the interviewer was presented with a most fascinating demonstration of the psychological dimensions of memory where silences represent resistances.

Interviewing conditions were excellent and free of any interruptions.

Length of interview: 5 hours and 38 minutes.

**OHI 12/88 Elsie Winifred WHEATON (née Pullen) b. 17/3/11 and Lewis (Brice) WHEATON Jnr b.16/1/08. Aged 77 years and 79 years respectively, at the time of the interviews, which were held at their residence at Cumberland Park on the 6th and 18th of November, 1988.**

Elsie Wheaton was born in London and was 15 months old when her family emigrated to South Australia. They lived in North Adelaide first, then on Harriet Street in Adelaide before moving to Parkside. Elsie is the seventh of eight children (three brothers and four sisters). Her father was a bricklayer by trade but he worked as an attendant and handyman for 25 years at the Parkside Mental home, now known as Glenside Hospital. Her mother was a cook in England prior to her marriage.

Elsie attended Gilles Street Primary School and then Parkside Primary School. She left school aged thirteen and a half years, when her mother 'put in an official form to the Government to say I could leave'. According to Elsie, she hated school. She worked for six years, prior to her marriage in 1932 in the office of Lloyd's Timber Mills. Elsie is the mother of three children. Mrs Wheaton was an easy subject to interview and provided much information about family routines and rituals.

Brice Wheaton was born in Manoora, in South Australia, the eighth of nine children. Brice has/had two brothers and six sisters. His father, Lewis Brice, was born in Stepney, South Australia, in 1869. He was educated at East Adelaide State school. Mr Wheaton Senior's main occupation was as a grocer and storekeeper. The Wheaton family lived at Manoora, then Victor Harbor and eventually settled in Parkside, a suburb of Adelaide.

Brice attended Unley Primary School and left when legally able to do so. He got a job in an Adelaide Hills Quarry and later worked as an electrician.

Interviewing the Wheaton's was fascinating as each would often finish the other's sentences or they would prompt if one or the other lost their train of thought. Their narratives frequently overlapped often blurring the chronology, and who participated in the events. Brice was the more reticent of the two interviewees.

Length of interview: 5 hours and 19 minutes.

**OHI 13/88 Thelma Ruby WILLIAMS (née Johnson) b. 11/10/08. Aged 80 years at the time of the interviews, which were held on the 8th and 17th of November 1988 at her Allenby Gardens residence.**

Thelma Williams was born at her grandparents' residence in Edinburgh Street North Perth (now known as Mount Hawthorn), W.A. The elder of two children, Thelma's brother, Allan Norieul Johnson, was born twelve years later on the 5th November, 1920, in the Adelaide Hospital in Adelaide, S.A. Her father, Harold Ernest Johnson, was born on the 21st of March 1882, in North Adelaide. He attended schools in Geelong, Victoria and in Hindmarsh, S.A. He was the third of thirteen children, many of whom did not survive for long. Mr. Johnson's father, Albert Edward Johnson, owned the Kangaroo Soap Company at Hindmarsh. He was married to Elizabeth Spencer, who was born at Mount Barker, S.A. Harold Ernest Johnson worked for his father at the Hindmarsh soap factory before following his future wife to Western Australia. Thelma's mother was Edith Alice Tidy, born on the 23rd August, 1881, in Richard Street, Hindmarsh. Edith was the daughter of George Robert Tidy, a hotelier and carpenter born in 1859 at Nairne; she was the eldest of eleven children

and made frequent trips to Western Australia with her family where her father sought work in various timber mills as a manager. Her education, as such, was frequently disrupted, although her large number of brothers and sisters was often enough to make up the quota for a school on a mill site. Thelma's parents married in 1905 at the Tidy's house at Cottesloe Beach in Western Australia. They returned to South Australia in 1910 and lived in Daly Avenue, Hindmarsh. In 1912 the Johnson family moved to Gawler Avenue, Welland South.

Thelma attended first the Hindmarsh Primary School, and then the Adelaide Technical High School, which was 'housed' on the top floor of the School of Mines (now known as the University of South Australia, North Terrace Campus, Adelaide). It was necessary to sit an entrance examination for this school. Thelma gained her Intermediate Certificate in 1923. Although invited to be a junior teacher at the school while attending University, economic necessity prevailed and Thelma took her first job at the Amateur Turf Club in the Brookman Building in Currie Street. Thelma then worked at the Master Butchers' Limited, in Light Square, Adelaide, as a book-keeper and secretary until her marriage in 1933.

Thelma married Keith Williams, a Hindmarsh 'lad', whose father was a foreman at Reid's Tannery in Hindmarsh. They attended Hindmarsh school and the Methodist Church at Brompton together. She met him at the age of seven. After renting a house, and two stints chasing work in Melbourne and Sydney, Mr Williams was re-employed at the Gas Company so they bought a house at Allenby Gardens, a new subdivision adjacent to Hindmarsh. Mrs. Williams gave birth to four children. Allan Graham was born on the 13/7/36, Ian Russell was born on the 19/7/40, Ray Kingsley was born on the 22/6/42, but died in infancy, and Claire Alison was born on the 18/6/44.

Mrs Williams was a lucid and articulate interviewee who was deeply involved in recording her own family history. She has been recorded for the S.A. Speaks Oral History Project and the tapes and transcripts are lodged in the Somerville collection of the Mortlock Library of South Australiana.

Length of interview : 5 hours and 6 minutes.

**OHI 14/88 Thelma Jean Smalley (née Hicks) b. 15/2/14 and Hubert (Bert) J.C. Smalley b. 28/9/11. Aged 74 years and 77 years, respectively, at the time of the interviews, which were held at their Somerton Park residence on the 28th of November, 1988 and the 12th of December, 1988.**

Thelma Smalley was born at Gladstone in the mid-north of South Australia. The eldest of three children, she has a younger brother, born in Gladstone in 1921, and a sister, born in Glenelg in 1926. Thelma is the daughter of a farmer. Mr. Hicks was born in Yanga, near Caltowie, in 1884, the eldest of six children. Her mother was a farmer's daughter, born in 1887, in Peterborough, in the mid-north of South Australia. The Hicks family moved to Glenelg in 1924 where Mr. Hicks managed a knitting mill. Thelma attended the Gladstone State School and then Glenelg Primary School. After Business College, Thelma worked until her marriage, in 1936, to Bert Smalley. Mrs Smalley has two children, Jeanette, born on the 22/10/1938, and Graham born on the 3/7/1946.

Hubert Smalley was born at Gawler, in the lower-north of South Australia. The elder of two children, his sister was born in Adelaide, on the 16/7/1919. Bert's father was born in Laura, in the mid-north of South Australia, on the 26/3/1880, and had a brother, George and two sisters, Emily and Mary. Educated at the Laura State School, Mr Smalley Senior found work in various Adelaide Foundries as a moulder. Bert Smalley recalls that his father 'did anything he could get during the depression', finally working at Horwood Bagshaws after the Depression. Bert's mother was born in Gawler, in 1883, the eldest of seven children - four brothers and two sisters. She was educated at the Gawler State school, and 'did not work' until her marriage at the age of 25 years.

Bert was educated at Cowandilla Primary School and Thebarton Technical High, until the exigencies of the Depression necessitated his leaving school in 1926, at the age of fifteen. He 'eventually qualified for the clerical section of the Public Service' and attended 'night school' for four years.

Mr and Mrs Smalley were entertaining interviewees. Mr. Smalley's laconic sense of humour underlined a strong sense of self-control which saw him 'give-away' minimal

information about himself. Questioned on his attitudes to his children and grand-children, he was far more forthcoming. Mr. Smalley was most concerned about the use of the tapes and transcripts after the interviews were completed. Release to the general public was given with the written proviso that, other than their name, 'please do not use full names or names of places'. This was particularly in reference to discussions of their relatives.

Length of interview : 5 hours and 49 minutes.

**OHI 15/88 Margaret Elizabeth KENNY (née Dutton) b. 25/9/07. Aged 81 years at the time of the interviews, which were held at her Fullarton residence on the 29th of November, 1988 and the 6th of December, 1988.**

Margaret Kenny (known as Maggie Liz to her family) was born at her grandmother's house on Mann Terrace, North Adelaide, the fourth of five children. Mary Doreen (Molly), born at Kingston, in the south-east of South Australia; Gwen, born at Coomandook, South Australia, 1898; Helen, born at North Adelaide in 1904; (Margaret 1907) and, Edward Ernest (Ned), born at Stirling, in the Adelaide Hills, 1910.

Margaret's father was Edward Ernest Dutton, who was born at Yankalilla, South Australia in 1867, the elder son of the owner of Dutton's Brewery, at Goolwa, South Australia. He had a brother, George, and three sisters, Ethel, Elizabeth and Dorothy. Edward Dutton was privately tutored by an Anglican minister at Goolwa, and later moved to Lucindale in the south-east of South Australia, where his parents had a property. He farmed at Lucindale and then opened 'virgin land' at Coomandook, camping in surveyor's tents until a house was built. Mr. Dutton, years later, became a Crown Land Valuer for the Taxation Department of South Australia, valuing land in the south-east of South Australia. Margaret's mother was Helen Ida Mary Venn, born at Robe in the south-east of South Australia, in 1869, the third of ten children born to a prosperous sea merchant and his wife. Helen Venn and her siblings - Kate, Effie Rose, Robert Alexander, Evelyn Maud, Frank Evans, Harry Norman, Colin Herbert, Mary Emily and Dorothy - were tutored at home by a Governess.



Helen married at the age of twenty-five years and, like her mother, always had live-in domestic 'help'.

Margaret lived at Mitcham and Fullarton at a time when these 'suburbs' were 'almost like a country town' where everybody knew everyone. Margaret was educated at St. Michael's Anglican Church School at Mitcham and at St. Peter's Collegiate Girl's School, at what is now known as Stonyfell. At the age of 17 years, after completing her Intermediate examinations, Mrs Kenny trained at the Adelaide Kindergarten Training College in Palmer Place, North Adelaide, and became a teacher in Miss Muriel Dunn's fee-paying Kindergarten and School (where Sheila and Robert Helpmann were amongst the pupils). On her marriage to Dominic Kelly, Mrs Dutton ceased teaching. Many years later, at the request of parents living in Netherby, Mrs Dutton began the Netherby (fee-paying) Kindergarten. Mrs Dutton also initiated a fee-paying kindergarten at Fullarton and taught at the Lady George Kindergarten at Highgate.

Mrs Kenny is the mother of Rosemary, born 1939, and Susan (birthdate not given). Mrs Dutton was very easy to interview, despite her misgivings that she 'had nothing to say'. Her insights into the training of Kindergarten Teachers in the 1920s, and the organisation of this sector, was of the utmost importance, particularly in comparison to her oldest sister, Molly, who had run a private kindergarten in the family home during the First World War.

As I also interviewed Miss Molly Dutton (QHI 17/88), the differing perceptions of these two sisters, born eleven years apart, was of tremendous significance in 'forging' an understanding of the dynamics of continually reworked 'memory'.

Length of Interview: 4 hours and 56 minutes

**OHI 16/88 Rita Margaret ELLIS (née Sincock) b.5/10/22 and Leonard (Len) James Ellis b. 10/8/08. Aged 66 years and 80 years respectively, at the time of the interviews, which were held at their Lower Mitcham residence on the 1st of December, 1988 and the 9th of December, 1988.**

Rita Ellis was born in Adelaide at her parent's house in Little Gilbert Street, adjacent to the 'Afghan's Mosque'.

At the age of two and a half years, the family shifted to a house on Bay Road, now known as Anzac Highway, at Kurralta Park, where Rita lived for 41 years. Rita was the second of four children - Mabel Berna, born 31/3/20; Eric Morris, born 1/6/26; and Audrey, born 18/10/29. Her father, who was born in Adelaide, on the 23/5/1882, was a well-known bookmaker who operated at the race tracks and from his betting shop. He graduated to this occupation at an early age, after a short stint at a state school at Ascot Park. Mr Sincock was one of ten children, eight brothers and one sister. At the age of thirty-six years, he married an Angaston woman, aged twenty-six, who had previously been employed as a cook and/or housemaid. Rita's mother was born at Sheoak Log, in South Australia, on the 1/12/1896. She had three sisters and a brother. Her schooling in Angaston was intermitted by the 'need' to assist her mother in the house.

Rita started her schooling in 1929 at the Methodist Church Hall at Black Forest, as the Infants School was not yet built. The majority of her schooling was spent at Black Forest State School, although, in the seventh and eighth grades she would have a weekly cooking and laundry lesson at the Goodwood Central School. Rita attended the Goodwood Central School for two terms, until her fourteenth birthday. As fees were required from students over the age of fourteen, Rita was required by her family to leave school. She professed a desire to be a school teacher, to no avail.

Mrs Ellis supported herself, and eventually stayed home to look after her widowed, mother, until her marriage in 1976 to a widower, Len Ellis. Rita has one step-daughter; Lorraine. Len Ellis was born at Malvern, in South Australia, at his parents' rented home. He was the eldest of four children - Stanley Owen, born 27/2/10; Eunice Maud, born

25/6/16; and, Noeleen Ruth, born 25/12/18. His father was born at Kanmantoo, in South Australia, on the 26/1/1872. Along with his sister Sarah, he attended school at Mitcham. Mr. Ellis Senior married at the age of thirty-five years, and supported his family as a gardener, although he did intersperse this for twelve years as a driver for a Chaff Mill. His wife was born in Caltowie, in the mid-north, in 1882, one of five children - three brothers, John, Harold and Reginald, and one sister, Elsie. She was of German descent. After attending school at Parkside, Len's mother worked as a seamstress, until her marriage at the age of twenty-six years.

The Ellis family moved house frequently, with the longest amount of time spent in the 'suburb' of Hawthorne. Len attended the new school of Westbourne Park in 1914 (opened in 1913), leaving at the age of fourteen to find employment. He first married in 1934 and his daughter Lorraine May was born on the 8/11/36. Mr Ellis is well known in the South Australian Gladioli Growers Association.

Both Mr and Mrs Ellis were interesting and informative interviewees. With the fourteen years difference between their ages, it was fascinating to 'plot' some of the changes in childhood practices in even this brief time span, while charting some of the 'constant' rites and rituals (The only hitch to the interviews was a power failure during the second interview, which necessitated a brief pause while swapping to batteries).

Length of Interview: 5 hours and 22 minutes

**OHI 17/88 Mary Doreen (Molly) DUTTON, b. 6/3/1896. Aged 92 years at the time of the interviews, held at her Fullarton residence, on the 6th of December, 1988 and the 13th of December, 1988.**

Molly Dutton was born at her Grandmother's house at Kingston, in the south-east of South Australia. She was the eldest of five children. (Refer to OHI 15/88 Kenny, for fuller details.) Molly lived at Lucindale, on her parents property, before moving to Coomandook where her father 'took up this virgin land'. Aged eight years, Molly lived in 'great big surveyor tents on the property' and received her first lessons from a 'maiden aunt' who

accompanied Molly's mother. Miss Dutton's first 'formal' schooling was received at the Wilderness School, in Adelaide, which she would attend periodically when she accompanied her mother when 'she came to town for the babies to be born and came to her mother' at North Adelaide. Dr. Brummit always attended these births. The first two siblings of Molly were returned to the tents at Coomandook. Eventually, a large stone house was built on the property. At the age of ten years, Molly was sent with her sister Gwen, aged eight years, to live with her grandmother on the Common, at Beaumont. They attended St. Davids' Anglican Church Day School, on the corner of Glynburn Road and High Street. When her parents moved to Stirling, in the Adelaide Hills, still retaining their Coomandook property, Molly had a brief stint at the Stirling State School. A move to Mitcham necessitated enrolment at St. Michael's Anglican Day School, from which Molly was sent as a boarder to Yoothamurra, near the seaside at Glenelg (the forerunner to Woodlands C.E.G.G.S.), where she stayed until sixteen years of age.

Molly returned to her parents' home, now at Fullarton, and was encouraged by mothers in the area to start a Kindergarten in her parents' home. She did so. Miss Dutton, after several years of her father's opposition, finally pursued her ambition to become a nursing sister. Trained at the Adelaide Hospital (the R.A.H.), in the early 1920s, Molly was a gold medalist in her final year. Sister Dutton was at the forefront of setting up camp hospitals in the Northern Territory during the Second World War, for wounded evacuees from New Guinea and South East Asia, for which she has received several citations. In a forthcoming book, by Joan Durdon, Miss Dutton was interviewed about her nursing experiences, along with other 'pioneer' nurses throughout Australia. Miss Dutton retired after many years as a Matron at prominent Adelaide Hospitals.

Miss Dutton was a joy to interview. She was precise, informative and always cross-checked dates, names and places if there was the slightest hesitation with her recall, which is prodigious. Miss Dutton has a tremendous collection of books published in Australia, and particularly in South Australia, along with newspaper cuttings, periodicals and pamphlets circa 1890s-1950s. Family recipe books, dating back to the 1880s, birthday books,

autograph books, and a family bible recording births from the 1840s were a rich source of information. Much of her grandparents' furniture (both maternal and paternal grandparents'), is held by Molly and/or her siblings' descendents, as are kerosene lamps and other artefacts. Molly still sews on her mother's 1890s Singer Sewing Machine.

The interviews were free of any interruptions, just as Miss Dutton had arranged.

Length of interviews: 5 hours and 16 minutes.

**OHI 18/89 Agnes Matilda (Tilly) SIMPSON (née Donellan), b. 13/7/13, and John Thomas Clare Horrace SIMPSON, b. 17/4/05. Aged 75 years and 83 years respectively, at the time of their interviews, held at their Allenby Gardens residence on the 4th of January, 1989 and the 18th of January, 1989.**

Tilly Simpson was born at a 'nursing home', 'sort of', run by a mid-wife at Hawker in the far-north of South Australia. Her parents' farm was at Hookiner, '20 miles' from Hawker. The Donellan family moved quite often, Tilly having lived in five houses during her first twelve years - Hookiner, Round Hill (near Quorn), Paradise (six miles from Gordon), at Boles Farm, (one mile from Gordon), and at Gordon, ('twenty miles' from Quorn) in the far-north of South Australia. Tilly was the youngest of four children - Jack, born 1908; Julia, born 1910; and Bernard, born 1911. Michael Donellan was aged forty three years at Tilly's birth, and combined work as a stone-mason/builder with working the land and shop-keeping. Born at Kapunda, in the mid-north of South Australia, in 1870, Michael Donellan was the fifth of eight children - four brothers, Pat, John, Tom and Ted and three sisters, Bridget, Til (Tilly) and Kate. For a brief while, Michael attended school at Round Hill, in the far-north, leaving to pursue itinerant work as a stone mason and builder. Mr. Donellan married in 1908. His wife, a Miss O'Dea, was born in Crystal Brook. (Tilly's details about her mother's background were very sketchy.)

Tilly was six when she started at the Gordon State School, a weatherboard school with a small, tin porch. In the school's early days, the numbers necessitated two teachers and

Misses Nell and Jo Francis, whose family lived in Gordon, 'kept school'. Mrs Simpson vividly remembers the school closing for a while in 1926, due to a falling enrolment and having to walk the ten miles to the nearest school at Willochra, every morning, and return on foot, every night, accompanied by her brother 'and another chappy'. Tilly left school at the age of fifteen and 'just stayed home'. She married Horrace Simpson on May 24, 1947. They have no children.

John Thomas Clare Horrace Simpson, otherwise known as Bosun, was born at Kapunda, in the mid-north of South Australia. The younger of two children, he has a sister, Dorothy, who was born in Adelaide in 1901. His father was the Publican of the Castle Hotel, at Kapunda, at the time of Horrie's birth. Mr Simpson Senior was born at Penneshaw, Kangaroo Island, in 1869. He had four brothers - Stephen, John, Nathaniel and Stamford, and one sister - Ginny. Horrie moved with his mother and sister to Adelaide, when he was nearly two years old. They had rooms in a boarding house, in Carrington Street, run by a Mrs. Burrell. His father was 'up north' at the time 'looking for gold'. Eventually, in 1910, when Horrie was five years old, his father sent for his family. It took them three days, travelling by train, to reach Oodnadatta in the far-north, where Mrs. Simpson Senior was based. Horrie and his sister Dorothy saw very little of their father, for years at a time, although he did buy the house Horrie lived in with his mother and sister from 1910 and 1935, for £20. Mr. Simpson Senior was on the roads, carting merchandise between Oodnadatta, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek in the area later known as the Northern Territory. He drove a camel team for many years as well as horses. As well as leading expeditions into the interior such as Captain Barclay's expedition in 1911 and Sam Wright's well sinking party from Oodnadatta to Alice Springs, circa 1912, Horrie's father would go droving up to the Victoria River Downs Station in the Northern Territory. As Horrie put it, he 'hardly ever knew my father'.

Horrie had a very close bond with his mother, born in Mintaro, in the mid-north of South Australia, the daughter of Irish immigrants, and one of five girls. She attended

Farrells Flat State School for seven years. Until her marriage, at the age of twenty-two years, Horrie's mother lived and worked at her parents' home.

Horrie Simpson attended the Oodnadatta school, from the age of seven years, and obtained his Qualifying Certificate. He stayed on at school for another year as a monitor (a form of pupil/teacher). Horrie decided not to become a teacher like his sister Dorothy, and, much to his mother's disappointment, he joined the South Australian Railways. He eventually moved to Stirling, outside of Port Augusta.

Mr. Simpson is a living treasure. Since our interviews he has been extensively in demand. A book about Horrie's days in Oodnadatta, edited by John Dallwitz, has been recently released, excerpts of the interviews which form the basis of the book have been played on Radio National's 'Talking History' program, and copies of some of his thousands of photographs of the outback, many of which he has hand coloured, are housed in the Mortlock Library of South Australiana. Besides being a gifted photographer, Horrie is a talented artist and has several hundred sketch books depicting the flora and fauna of the far-north of South Australia. As if this was not enough, Horrie has kept a daily log of events since the age of fifteen. Amongst the over seventy-five years of recorded events, Horrie has collected newspaper clippings of outback events, such as the first plane in Oodnadatta on the 2/10/21, an event he also photographed!

Mr and Mrs Simpson proved to be unforgettable interviewees. Apart from the annoyance of a chiming clock (which they dismissed as not being a problem), the interviews proceeded easily and at length - with a great deal of post-interview discussions!

Length of interviews : 5 hours and 51 minutes

**OHI 19/89 Jean SUDLOW (née Lowe), b. 3/12/08. Aged 81 years at the time of the interviews, which were held at her Allenby Gardens home, on the 9th and 16th of January, 1989.**

Jean was born at her parents' residence in Milner Street in the inner suburb of Hindmarsh. She is the eldest of four children - Herbert, born in 1911; Ronald, born in

1915; and Rita, born in 1921. Her father had also been born in Hindmarsh, in 1879. The family's long involvement in Hindmarsh stemmed from the arrival of Jean's grandfather, at the age of seven, with his Scottish family.

As her father before her, Jean attended the Hindmarsh State School and, for one year, Woodville High School, which she left at the age of fourteen to help her mother in the house. Jean's father, a commercial traveller, was away quite often and Jean's mother, a waitress prior to her marriage, was 'happy to have the help'. Mrs Lowe was born in Lobethal in 1885, schooled at the Peterborough State School and, prior to her marriage in 1908, had worked to support her family.

Jean's widowed grandfather (Lowe) always lived with the Lowe family. Jean has only ever lived in two houses, her family house in Hindmarsh and, from her marriage to Jack Sudlow in 1935, at the age of twenty-seven years, in her marital house in the adjacent suburb of Allenby Gardens. Her son Ron was born in 1936 in the Hindmarsh Hospital. Mrs Sudlow is a quite, reserved and gracious woman who assumed the role of interviewee conscientiously - to the point of making a list of things to talk about. She gradually relaxed during the interviews to the point of forgetting her list until the final stages of the second interview. Recording conditions were good. Mrs Sudlow has a wonderful ephemera collection - cigarette cards, postcards, autograph albums et cetera. As an avid photographer in her youth, there are many family photographs.

Of interest to my research is the 'comparison' between her interview and that of her oldest and closest friend, Mrs Thelma Williams (née Johnson). Their shared and different recollections of similar events, places and activities is illuminative regarding the process of re-memorisation.

Length of interview : 5 hours and 47 minutes

**OHI 20/89 Isabel Kathleen McLEAN (née Greenham) b. 21/12/98. Aged 91 years at the time of the interviews, which were held in her 'aged care' unit at her Somerton Park residence on the 17th and 24th of January, 1989.**



Kathleen was born at Naracoorte, in the south-east of South Australia, where she lived for three years until her family moved to Murray Bridge, and subsequently to Adelaide. The fifth of six children, she had four brothers and one sister. George was born 6/1/1888; Charles on the 21/1/1891; Frederick was born on the 4/4/1893; Howard on the 21/3/1895; and, Laurel was born on the 6/4/1908.

Kathleen's father was born at Norton Summit, in the Adelaide Hills, on the 10/5/1864, he had eight sisters and four brothers. He attended school at Whinham College and was employed throughout his career as a public servant. Kathleen's mother was born in Knox Street, Adelaide in 1867, the elder of two sisters. She attended Norwood School and was employed as a seamstress, prior to her marriage in 1886, at the age of nineteen years.

Kathleen attended schools at Wellington Road (now known as Portrush Road) and the Goodwood State School. At the age of thirteen she went to Unley High School for three years. After attending the Muirden Business College Kathleen was employed as a shorthand typist.

She married Earnest McLean on the 15/10/1920. Mrs McLean gave birth to a stillborn son and a stillborn daughter. In later years, she and her husband fostered a boy, Jack, who had been in welfare care until the age of twelve years. Mrs McLean worked as a Post Mistress for many years and was an active participant in community affairs. Widowed for many years, Mrs McLean looks after herself in a unit in a Masonic Lodge Village. An active woman, Mrs McLean still plays competitive bowls and once a week she makes a trip by car, which she drives, to Mitcham (her previous suburb) to have her hair set at the hairdressers. She is perceptive, alert and articulate and proved to be an absorbing interviewee who provided much information about Adelaide and its environs. Interviewing conditions were excellent.

Length of interview : 5 hours and 47 minutes.

**OHI 21/89 Annie (Anne) TONKIN (née Theodore) b. 10.12/12. Aged 77 years at the time of the interviews, which were held at her East Glenelg residence, on the 17th and 31st of January, 1989.**

Anne was born at her grandparents' Semaphore residence and then was taken to live at Heathfield, and later Aldgate, in the Adelaide Hills. The eldest of three girls, Monica was born on the 22/12/13 and Dorothy was born on the 21/5/1915.

Anne's father, Perc. George Theodore, was born in Port Adelaide in 1886, one of six children. Mr. Theodore had three brothers and two sisters. One brother, Edward Theodore, later became Premier of Queensland and a Labor Federal Treasurer. Mr. Theodore attended school at Heathpool and worked first for the P.M.G. (now known as Telecom), then for a Hill's quarry, before opening a business in Aldgate. Theodore Lane in Aldgate is named after him.

Anne's mother, Bertha Agnes Grahl, was born in Port Adelaide in 1887. Of German descent, she had five brothers and one sister. During the First World War, many of the family members changed their name to Burns. Bertha did not work away from her home after she left the Glanville Public School.

Anne attended the public schools at Heathfield and Aldgate and later became a weekly boarder at Cabra Dominican Convent, at Cumberland Park. After leaving school at fourteen she assisted her father in his chaff and grain store before training as a 'tailoress'.

Anne Theodore married Robert Tonkin, an employee of the South Australian Railways, in 1939. They had one son, Gerard Theodore Tonkin, born on the 7/2/41.

Anne provided much information about daily household routines and life in the Hills district. Interviewing conditions were good and Mrs Tonkin was a perceptive interviewee.

Length of interview : 5 hours and 16 minutes.

**OHI 22/89 Clifton John (Paddy) BAKER b.4/3/97. Aged 91 years at the time of the interviews, which were held at his unit on the 14th and 21st of February, 1989.**

Paddy was born on his parents' farm at Wolseley, in the south-east of South Australia, the younger of two sons. His father was born in Reynella in 1862 and from an early age was a farm labourer. When land was opened up near the Victorian border, Mr. Baker Senior applied successfully for a block. He later joined the railways when a railway

line was installed from Murray Bridge to Bordertown. Paddy's mother was one of eight children, five girls and three boys. She was born in 1866, near Strathalbyn, although she moved to Lucindale when her father gained work as a stonemason. The Coad family eventually purchased many blocks of land around Lucindale.

Paddy Baker's grandfather came from England when the gold strikes in Bendigo were announced. He operated Bullock trains carrying flour from Robe to Bendigo, eventually disappearing without a trace on one of his journeys.

Paddy grew up on a fifty acre block which allowed the family to be self-sufficient. At four years of age he followed his brother to school and was allowed to attend school despite being ineligible to be placed on the roll. He frequently had an afternoon sleep on the teacher's lap. Chores before and after school were part of an unchanging daily routine. A Saturday evening dance in Wolseley, for young and old, afforded an opportunity for people off the surrounding farms to meet, as well as picnics at the government waterhole, sporting fixtures and church activities. The Baker family were 'staunch' Methodists. A particular highlight for Paddy were the travelling shows - the magic lantern show, the circus and boxing.

Paddy left school at thirteen and hired himself out as a farm labourer. When war was declared in 1914 Paddy volunteered and served in Egypt and France. He also volunteered to serve in the Second World War and was 'stationed' in the Northern Territory. During this period Mr. Baker married and had a daughter, Kay. Paddy later worked in an engineering firm which he part-owned.

Paddy Baker should have been interviewed by many historians. His memories of two world wars alone would have provided researchers with rich detail. For me, his recollections of basically a nineteenth century 'childhood' were to prove invaluable.

Recording conditions were poor. As it was an extremely hot 'period', Mr. Baker preferred to be interviewed outside. Consequently, the tape has extraneous noises.

Length of interview : 5 hours : 11 minutes.

OHI 23/89 Arthur A SCHUBERT b.19/11/05. Aged 75 years at the time of interviewing by his son, David Schubert, by whose kind permission I made a transcript. An interview with David Schubert was conducted on the 8/4/89 at the Lutheran Publishing house re his father's narrative.

Arthur was born in his parents' home in Tanunda, in the Barossa Valley, in the house his father built for his bride. From the age of seven he attended the Lutheran School in Tanunda, until it was closed in 1917 due to anti-German sentiment during World War I. For two and a half years he attended the Tanunda Public School, leaving school at the age of fourteen having gained his Qualifying Certificate. He then worked on his father's property near Gnadenfrei.

Arthur had two brothers and two sisters and, like Arthur, they also attended Saturday School for instructions in religion (in German). St. John's Church, in Tanunda, formed the cornerstone of the religious life of the Schubert family. All church services were held in German.

Both sets of grandparents lived in the Barossa Valley, so extended family living was an integral part of Arthur's childhood. German was the first language, English was only spoken with non-Germans or at school. When Arthur attended the Lutheran school, instructions were in German in the morning and English in the afternoon. This changed, of course, when he attended the public school.

Arthur grew up in a community where German Lutherans were expected to 'work hard and look after their properties very well. Being good citizens in a general sort of way'. Dancing, 'unmarried pregnancies', and marrying out of church were opposed vigorously by the pastors.

Arthur met his future wife, Esther, in 1927, but 'largely through the depression and lack of funds' they did not marry until 1933. They worked on '25 acres of vineyard and about 215 acres of orchard' which they initially had to clear after its purchase in 1933. Arthur and Esther's sons were born in 1942 (David), 1944 (Mark) and 1948 (James).

Although I did not conduct this interview, it is included on the basis that it was utilised to inform my interview with Arthur's son, David Schubert, which contained reminiscence of his father's life and the dynamics of oral traditions. It was fascinating to observe the workings of generational life histories. I am indebted to David Schubert for providing me with a fuller understanding of the Barossa Deutsch, with particular relation to various rites and rituals - from tin-kettling, to pig-killing ceremonies, to homeopathic medicines. His further contacts and sources also proved invaluable.

Length of interview : 1 hour

Length of untaped interview with David Schubert : 3 hours and 10 minutes.

**OHI 24/89 Sara Ann BARBER (née Schocroft) b. 6/3/20. Aged 69 years at the time of the interviews, which were held at the home of her younger son on the 10th, 17th and 24th April, 1989.**

Ann Barber was born at her parents' home in Spring Gully, Piccadilly in the Adelaide Hills. The seventh child of eight, Ann has three brothers and four sisters. Katherine Bessie was born on the 27/12/04; David George was born on the 13/7/06; Claude Victor was born on the 11/7/08; Solomon Paul was born on the 17/8/10; Lilly Rose was born on the 10/5/13; Minnie Dale was born on the 7/12/15; and, Muriel Grace was born on the 4/4/25. Her father, born on the 22/3/1846 at 'New Tiers', Crafers, was 58 years old at the time of Ann's birth. His marriage to Ann's mother was his third. A vegetable gardener, Ann knows little of his schooling details or of his early life, other than that he had three sisters - Mary Maria b. 1844; Sarah Ann (her namesake) b. 1848; and, Clara Matilda b.1850. Ann does know he ran a market garden at Stirling with his first wife, whom he divorced. Little is known of the second marriage. The step-children were all involved in vegetable gardens so some contact was maintained. Ann's mother, born in 1879, was the eldest of ten children, all born at Basket Range. Two of the children, George and Rose died in infancy - George in 1903 aged six years and Rose in 1895 aged four years.

Life in the mud and timber house without electricity or running water, was particularly hard for the Schocroft family. Everyone helped on the 65 acre property and schooling was 'fitted in' around chores. Ann well remembers not having lunch to take to school at Stirling East (state school). The depression years were particularly difficult ones for her family. Ann left school at fourteen, not from choice.

Ann worked at home until she accepted a job as a Ward's maid at the Blythe Hospital, at the age of seventeen. The age for nurse training was then eighteen. Ann eventually trained as a nurse at the Rose Park Hospital, in general nursing and midwifery. She married in 1940 and has two sons.

Mrs Barber's recollections of gendered labour and her mother's contributions to the domestic economy are particularly insightful. The work of her mother, as a Salvation Army officer, in the Stirling community is also interesting in its intersections with 'the gentry' and 'the poor' during the depression years.

Ann was a thoughtful and reflective interviewee. Interviewing conditions were fraught with difficulties, from a tape that snapped to a tape recorder that refused to work! The borrowed tape recorder has provided an inferior sound quality, which is regrettable.

Length of interview : 5 hours and 28 minutes.

**OHI 25/89 Donald LINKE b. 20/5/23. Aged 66 years at the time of the interview, which was held at his Morphett Vale home on the 9th of June, 1989.**

Donald Linke was born at his parents' Nuriootpa home in the Barossa Valley, in South Australia, the second of three sons and a daughter, Donald attended both the public Primary and Secondary schools in Nuriootpa and left to work in his parents' haulage and cartage business.

Biographical details of his German Lutheran family background are sketchy as the second interview was abandoned prior to the death of his German born wife, Dulcie, whom he married in 1949 after her arrival in this country as a refugee. They have two sons.

The first interview gave me much insight into the rites and rituals of a Lutheran home within the tight-knit Barossa Deutsch community. It was unfortunate that it was conducted amidst his wife's illness, which led to the termination of the interviews.

Length of interview : 2 hours and 45 minutes.

SAMPLE INTERVIEW

OHI 9/88 Coralie Green (formerly Johnson née Ravenscroft) b. 5/7/24. Aged 64 years at the time of the interviews held in her West Beach residence on the 5th and 12th of September 1988.

The fourth of five children of Herbert Ravenscroft, born in Tenterfield, New South Wales in 1889, a baker and pastry cook, and the fourth of fifteen children, and Ruth Dixon, born in 1888, in Wellington, New Zealand, the second of seven children, a secretary prior to her marriage (who later stood unsuccessfully for State and Senate elections as an Independent). Coralie Ravenscroft was born in a 'nursing home' in Harrow Road at St. Peters, South Australia, on the 5th of July 1924.

After schooling at St. Morris, Wellington Road School and East Adelaide School, Coralie left Adelaide and attended Prahran Tech. in Melbourne. At fourteen she had to leave school and work.

Coralie completed tertiary studies as a mature age student and is a qualified teacher and social worker. Twice married, once widowed, she has one daughter Susan, who was born in Melbourne in 1958. Intelligent, thoughtful, incisive and 'blessed' with a 'retentive' memory Coralie was a delight to interview.

Length of interview : 5 hours and 57 minutes.



QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW 1SECTION I - PERSONAL DATA

## TOPIC 1 - HOUSEHOLD OF ORIGIN

(This sheet was left for the interviewee to fill out, prior to the first interview.)

Interview number/date: 5/9/88. First interview.

Respondent's name: Coralie Green (formerly Johnson : née Ravenscroft)

Present address: Deleted.

Marital Status: Widowed.

If married, year of marriage: (1) 1954 (divorced) (2) 1967.

If children, details of birth/sex-order/number: (1) Child - daughter 1958.

1. When and where were you born?  
**5/7/24, St. Peters, S.A. Nursing Home.**
  2. How long did you live in the house where you were born?  
**2-3 years.**
  3. How many houses did you live in between the ages of 0-12? or until leaving school?  
**Nine.**
  4. What was your birth position in the family?  
**Fourth child.**
  5. How many brothers and sisters did you have?  
**Four brothers and sisters.**
- (Date, sex, order, names and places of birth).  
**1916 Alf**  
**1917 Bert**  
**1919 Bonnie**  
**\* 1924 Coralie - St. Peters S.A.**  
**1933 David - Joslin S.A.**
6. Were there any other household members?  
**No.**
  7. How old was your father when you were born?  
**36 years.**
  8. Where and when was he born?  
**Tenterfield N.S.W. 1888 or 1889.**
  9. How many brothers and sisters did he have?  
**14 children in his family.**

(dates, sex order, names, places of birth)

**1882 Edward**  
**Florence**  
**Frederick**  
**1888 Herbert (my father)**  
**Maude**

Mary  
 Alfred  
 Ada  
 Sara  
 Francis  
 Ethel  
 Isobel  
 Arthur  
 Adelaide

15th infant - died at birth and so did mother - mother died  
 4/7/1909.

10. Did he go to school?  
 I believe he went to school spasmodically but left in grade 4.
11. At what age did he marry?  
 27 years.
12. What was his main occupation(s)?  
 Baker and pastry cook.
13. Did he have any other jobs?  
 When he left school he went droving with his father. He also broke  
 in horses and may have worked on a large station property for a  
 short time. He joined the Salvation army and was an officer when he  
 met mother.
14. Where did he work?  
 McGrath's Bakery (foreman).

Depression

Booberowie S.A. Country  
 Lameroo S.A. Country  
 Daysdale N.S.W. Country - 1941  
 Frankston vic.  
 Prahran Vic. (Capital Bakery)

15. Was he ever unemployed?  
 Yes, often after 1930. Things didn't improve for him until 1941.
16. How old was your mother when you were born?  
 36 years.
17. Where was she born?  
 Wellington, New Zealand.
- When?  
 1889.
18. How many brothers and sisters did she have?  
 Seven children.

(dates, sex order, names, places of birth)

1887 Rose Wishart  
 1888 Ruth (my mother) (Ravenscroft)  
 Bramwell Dixon  
 Horace Dixon  
 Ivy Sitters  
 Grace Dixon  
 Myrtle Dixon

19. Did she go to school?  
**Yes.**
- (If so, where, when, length?)  
**Country school Bunnythorpe N.Z., various towns in Australia. I think she left school at 15 years. Went to Stott's Business College.**
20. What was her occupation before she married?  
**Secretary.**
21. Did she work outside the house after she was married?  
- regular full-time  
**1915-1921 Salvation Army Officers.**
- regular part-time  
**1943-1953 Cashier at Myers.**
22. If your mother worked when she had children, who cared for you?  
**Dad if he was out of work or else I just waited until she came home.**
23. In the area you lived in longest when you were a child, what 'social class' do you think most people belonged to?  
**Lower Middle Class.**

(The answers are recorded as written by Coralie Green on the original sheet).

Mrs. C. Green - Interview I Tape I - 5/9/88

Pre-recorded

Margaret: Interviewing Mrs Coralie Green on the 5th of September, 1988 for my childhood memories project. Interview 1, Tape 1, Side A.

Interview

Margaret: What is your full name?

**Coralie: Coralie Green, formerly Ravenscroft.**

Margaret: When and where were you born?

**Coralie: At St. Peters on the 5th of July 1924.**

Margaret: You were saying about Ravenscroft ... what is it?

**Coralie: I think it's probably a Norman name.**

Margaret: And did it have a particular meaning?

**Coralie: What's interesting is that it was a female name taken over by a male.**

Margaret: So the whole thing was a female name?

**Coralie: Ravenscroft, yes.**

Margaret: I thought it might have been two names put together.

**Coralie: No.**

Margaret: Is it anything to do with birds?

**Coralie: The crest has got three ravens on it.**

Margaret: Has someone done your family history?

**Coralie: Yes.**

Margaret: Is it a written-out history?

**Coralie: Yes.**

Margaret: Would I be allowed to have a look at it?

**Coralie: Yes. It's not particularly our family, just the name Ravenscroft and where it came from.**

Margaret: Were you born at home or in a hospital?

**Coralie: Nursing home I think. Not a hospital, just one of those little suburban houses that were used as maternity wards.**

Margaret: So there would have been a doctor as well as a midwife?

**Coralie: I think only a midwife.**

Margaret: Can you tell me about the house you lived in - the most significant one?

**Coralie:** That was in St. Peters at Joslin. We had about an acre of land and they used to say that the house was the old farm house and the land between First Avenue and Payneham Road was the old farm and had been subdivided. So we lived in the old farmhouse which had an entrance from Payneham Road and also from First Avenue. And part of the old orchard was still there.

Margaret: Is there any remains of the house there now?

**Coralie:** No. Now there are six houses on the area. It's now where Balmoral Court is at St. Peters.

Margaret: So it was a fairly big one?

**Coralie:** When I counted up the number of rooms it seemed to me that there were only three bedrooms, a large lounge, dining room combined, and a big kitchen. At the back there was a room which I happened to have always as a play room and the main thing I used to play was school so I had this room as my playroom but I mainly used it as a school room.

Margaret: What was the house made of?

**Coralie:** The outside was roughcast and it used to be ... that pebbly looking stuff - I imagine it might have been brick underneath and it had a verandah down two sides.

Margaret: You said three bedrooms and a kitchen - who slept in the rooms? What were the sleeping arrangements?

**Coralie:** Mum and dad had the first bedroom on the left. I assume my sister and I had the other one on the right down the passage way and then the lounge/dining room was the next one past my parents and then my brothers had a big room at the back. The wash house was definitely outside. I can't remember where the bathroom was and I can't remember where the toilet was.

Margaret: You can't remember a fixed bathroom area?

**Coralie:** I can't remember it.

Margaret: What about a tin bath?

**Coralie:** I think there was a tin bath but I can't remember where it was.

Margaret: You can't remember the lavatory either?

**Coralie:** No. But no way can I remember where it was. I can remember the lavatory in some of the other houses because my father wasn't allowed to smoke in the house and he used to go and sit on the toilet outside. We'd all take turns, you know he was there when we wanted to go. I can remember all the other lavatories but I can't remember this one at the main house.

Margaret: One woman I interviewed told me that she learnt to read in one of the toilets. She was on a farm out the back and the lavatory paper was the Stock and Station Journal and she learnt to read by piecing bits together to see which story followed the other one.

**Coralie:** I mainly learnt to read from the labels - tomato sauce labels or apricot jam or whatever was on the table, that was my main reading material.

Margaret: This was before you went to school?

**Coralie: When I was going to school.**

Margaret: I think that's fascinating how people learnt to read through those sorts of things. Did your parents pay rent for the house or did they own it?

**Coralie: At first they paid rent and then during the Depression because they ran a Mission I think they were offered the house at a reasonable price and so they started to buy it.**

Margaret: This was through the Salvation Army?

**Coralie: No, this was their own mission. But they were renting and then they started to buy.**

Margaret: Can you tell me a bit about their mission?

**Coralie: Because they were Salvation Army officers, when the Depression struck they felt there was a need and I don't know whether it was my father first or mother - I think father - he got in touch with Barr-Smith and they were talking about all the single men they had at the Exhibition Building down near the Torrens. They had a single man's home and my father was acting as the Manager of it. Some of the money - I think it was 500 pounds he was allocated by Barr-Smith to help run this single men's hostel for unemployed single men (it was supposed to be) but a lot of them were married men.**

My mum thought the women weren't being catered for so she picked this up and started working with the women. She started what was called the Women's Welfare League, mainly collecting and giving out clothing and getting the women together. It was a religious thing as well.

Margaret: But the 'clients' of course would have been the people using the service - any religion?

**Coralie: Yes.**

Margaret: The Salvation Army also gave money to this?

**Coralie: No. This was quite independent.**

Margaret: How did that square up with the other kinds of stuff that was going on in the Depression - the official rationing etc.

**Coralie: I think that was quite alright. They must have had some official sanction. I don't know whether my father suggested using the Exhibition building as a single men's haven sort of thing or whether that single men's quarters was there and he applied for the job - I don't know which happened first.**

Margaret: As a small child with this going on were you very involved in it?

**Coralie: No. I was never allowed to go down there because I was given the impression it was a very rough situation and no place for me. And the other thing was that sometimes at night the police would come and get my father to go down there because there was a fight.**

Margaret: So your life was kept fairly separate from that?

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** With your houses, other than the one you were describing then, why were there so many moves around?

**Coralie:** My father was a foreman baker and when the Depression came he was asked by his boss to take less money and he was also a very ardent Trade Unionist and he wouldn't scab on the Union. He said this is the wage (pause) his boss - I think it was McGrath's Bakery he worked for - they said 'If you don't do it for that amount, somebody else will'. He said 'That's just too bad, I am not going to scab on the Union'.

I think for some reasons he may have been black-listed by a lot of employers because he really didn't get back into a full time job ever in South Australia. He did get a couple of jobs in the country - at Barmera and at Lameroo and then because mum didn't like living in the country eventually we went to Victoria and he did get a job there.

We were brought up on that sort of philosophy - Trade Unions are a good thing, without Trade Unions we're worthless, we will never have decent conditions and even if you have to sacrifice your own welfare for the sake of a principle then you do it.

**Margaret:** Was there a marriage of that kind of socialism with Christianity?

**Coralie:** For my father I am sure there was a marriage of socialism and Christianity. With my mother she was always a conundrum - she was much better educated than my father, she was the stronger person in the relationship, she was more middle class but also much more conservative.

**Margaret:** Getting back to the house in St. Peters - you would have had electric light? You can't remember being without any kind of lighting like that?

**Coralie:** I can't remember, I'd be guessing. I know paying bills were a problem. I would imagine that sometimes we had the light cut off and had to use candles.

**Margaret:** I noticed you started to describe your furniture and those sorts of things - what do you remember about the furniture?

**Coralie:** Very basic. I can remember what was in my sister's and my room. We had beds - I think they were those wooden trundle sort of beds where the legs tucked under. Cloth mattresses. I am not sure that we had sheets actually. Mostly I can remember that we had no dressing table but we had these packing cases - two or three of them - I think at one stage we might have had four so that we had two shelves each. Mum used to put a curtain around it.

In the corner we had a corner wardrobe. Just a piece of wood across the top. I think they were about 30 shillings to buy and they were just a piece of wood across the top and a screw in the middle to hang the coathangers on and then a curtain hung down the front of it.

I can't remember anything else being in the room at all. But we did have lino on the floor. I can remember there was a distinction between the sort of lino - I am not even sure that my brothers had lino - because if we went into a house and some rooms had lino and some didn't, the girls had the room with the lino and the boys didn't.

**Margaret:** That was a family decision or it was just what everybody else did?

**Coralie:** That's what our family's decision was. Mum and Dad had first option of the best sort of room and then the two girls would have what was going next. And then the boys.

**Margaret:** What would the boys have had in their bedroom?

**Coralie:** I think they probably had the same sort of thing as we had. I don't know whether they had their chest of drawers made out of the packing cases or an old table. They were into crystal sets and things of this kind and also into boxing.

**Margaret:** Was that expensive to have a crystal set?

**Coralie:** I don't think so. For the boxing - all they had was a pair of boxing gloves. My father used to think of himself as a bit of a boxer, so he used to train them up and then they used to have play bouts. We were never allowed in but we could hear this going on.

**Margaret:** This was in the house.

**Coralie:** Yes. A lot of the boys' friends would come in and my father would referee it.

**Margaret:** And you were specifically told to stay out?

**Coralie:** I don't know that we were told to but we just knew we weren't to go in.

**Margaret:** What about the kitchen - where was the cooking done?

**Coralie:** The kitchen was at the back of the house - it had a big wood stove and I think it had a larder, pantry. A big kitchen table and normally we would eat in the kitchen. It would only be perhaps on a Sunday or if we had visitors that we would eat in the dining room.

**Margaret:** What was in the dining room?

**Coralie:** A drawing room set of furniture and a lounge suite. And normally we always had a pianola on time payment. I don't think we ever owned any of them but we always had one. I am sure she had a very bad credit rating, but she always insisted that she had to have a pianola.

**Margaret:** Do you know why?

**Coralie:** She played the piano - at first it was a piano, but then with the children and my brothers, well all of us played the violin.

**Margaret:** She was in charge of the house? Would she do all the cooking or how was the domestic arrangement organised?

**Coralie:** My father, I think, thought he was the better cook and I think my mother probably went along with that because he was a baker, and pastry cook. I think when he was there he would cook but when he wasn't there she would do it. He generally wasn't there for breakfast because he would go to work early. I am not sure about tea time. I think they both used to do it. But Sunday lunch my father always did the cooking.

**Margaret:** What would you have for Sunday lunch?

**Coralie:** Always a roast. Always apple pie or something like that.



Margaret: With your mother's contacts in Welfare Agencies and things did she ever have anyone come in and help in her house?

**Coralie: No.**

Margaret: What about if she was sick?

**Coralie: I think dad did it. Nobody ever came in at any time that I can remember.**

Margaret: What about you - from an early age did you have specific household tasks?

**Coralie: Yes. I used to clean the bath.**

Margaret: So you did have a bath.

**Coralie: Yes. I always did it half-heartedly anyway.**

Margaret: Did you have to set the table and those sorts of things?

**Coralie: I think my older sister tended to that.**

Margaret: Do you ever remember being unwilling to the point of refusing to do any household work?

**Coralie: I was a little bit of a terror really. My sister took a lot more responsibility. And if we were having buns for tea they would be counted up and I remember I used to get her mad - she would have the table all laid out and I would come in and grab a bun - I don't think I did my fair share at all.**

Margaret: Your sister did do a fair amount of domestic work in the house?

**Coralie: Yes, but she wasn't a drudge. I think she would have set the table and washed up. And I think I was supposed to dry up. I can remember another job - I had to cut the toilet paper - the newspaper for the toilet.**

Margaret: What would the boys have to do within the house?

**Coralie: Very little. And I can't remember they did much outside either.**

Margaret: Can you remember your mother and father ever specifically delineating who was to do what and checking up to see if it was done?

**Coralie: No.**

Margaret: Would there have been any bones of contention....

**Coralie: Yes. It was mainly my sister who would complain that I wasn't doing my share. She is five years older than me and she certainly thought she was doing more than her fair share and to be honest she was.**

Margaret: How did your parents reconcile that?

**Coralie: I don't think they bought into it. They would tell me to do such and such but I don't know that they followed it up. I think we all had to make our own beds.**

Margaret: Boys included?

**Coralie: I think so.**

Margaret: Was there any pattern to the way in which your mother organised the house. Was there a specific washing day, ironing day?

Coralie: I would imagine so. She wasn't a traditional sort of housewife. I think she would be very much like working women today. She would do things as they fitted in. She was very meticulous. I would imagine it was every spring. We had a spring clean. Mat down the centre passage and there was this black goo stuff put all down either side of the coir matting.

Margaret: Is that what they called japanning?

Coralie: I think so. The brand name was 'Easywork'. Actually I don't know whether she did it or my father did. I know she would have been the initiator of the 'Easywork'. It was wonderful because not only did they put it all down the edges of the matting in the passage but also around a square of carpet in the lounge room. They also used the 'easywork' to blacken the stove with and do the bit in front of the hearth. So that in our house black 'easywork' seemed to be used for many things.

Margaret: Why do you call it 'easywork'.

Coralie: That's what it was called. I can remember her saying 'I've got to easywork this or that'.

Margaret: What about washing - what facilities did she have to do the washing?

Coralie: The laundry was a separate room at the back of the house and it had a wood copper. I think that wood copper might have been used for hot water for the bath. Baths were Saturday night because we had church on Sunday. She'd use the copper. I imagine with so many children - at one stage there were five children - I think she would have had at least two or three copper loads.

Margaret: Where would she hang them out to dry and on what?

Coralie: Just on a piece of wire and clothes props.

Margaret: What would she use to do the ironing?

Coralie: I remember quite early on she did have these irons that you put coals in. And flat irons too. I don't think we had an electric iron. I think Grandma came over when my brother was born. I don't think we would have had an electric iron until some time after 1933.

Margaret: Did she have different-size flat irons?

Coralie: Yes, she had three. And also one with the coals in it. I used to love this iron with the coals in it?

Margaret: Because you'd use it?

Coralie: No. I just loved to see it working. I was fascinated by it.

Margaret: Were you as children allowed to iron?

Coralie: It would have been my sister - not me. I think I was really very shrewd actually.

Margaret: The bathroom - you can't remember specifically where it was but you did remember that you got your hot water.....

**Coralie:** I would imagine that as you came down this passage way, there was parent's bedroom, lounge/dining room, kitchen and I think the bottom room must have been the bathroom. On the other side was our bedroom, my brothers' bedroom and this little verandah enclosed in at the back. Then right out the back was a big walnut tree. That's where the laundry was.

**Margaret:** You said bathing was Saturday night?

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** What was the order for bathing?

**Coralie:** I can tell you for certain my mother would always go first in everything.

**Margaret:** That's unusual?

**Coralie:** Not for my mother.

**Margaret:** Why?

**Coralie:** I don't know but this was the way it was.

**Margaret:** Who would follow her?

**Coralie:** Although I am not sure about this evening bath - she always had a cold shower every morning. Every morning of her life. I'd read in a Penguin book recently that in the 19th century cold showers were recommended to get rid of your sexual frustrations etc. so I remember having a giggle to myself - I thought she must have been pretty good in the cot to have cold showers every morning. We were always brought up on this idea but none of the family ever followed it. None of us ever.

**Margaret:** Did she ever say that that is what she did as a child?

**Coralie:** No. We were just always told 'why don't you have cold showers like I do every morning'.

**Margaret:** Would she ever extol its virtues in any way?

**Coralie:** Yes. It was just wonderful! We didn't know what we were missing!

**Margaret:** What sort of shower was it?

**Coralie:** Ordinary shower.

**Margaret:** You said that you can't remember what kind of toilet you had?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** Would you have had potties under the bed at night?

**Coralie:** I think the girls did. My mother definitely had a potty. I used to see her taking it out in the morning.

**Margaret:** Did you have to empty yours?

**Coralie:** I didn't do it for sure! (Laughs)

**Margaret:** Looking back, who would you have seen as definitely in charge of the house?

**Coralie:** My mother.

Margaret: Were there any kind of household tasks that she complained of doing?

**Coralie:** I think household tasks for her - if they had to be done, they had to be done.

Margaret: She wasn't a slave to it?

**Coralie:** No.

Margaret: What about your father then; did he fit very easily into that framework?

**Coralie:** Very much. Anything for a quiet life.

Margaret: Did he have his set chores outside the house?

**Coralie:** Yes. Every Sunday morning father cleaned everybody's shoes.

Margaret: Was it something he wanted to do or just something he thought he should do?

**Coralie:** He just did. On Sunday morning he cleaned everyone's shoes and then he cooked the Sunday lunch.

Margaret: So he was fairly occupied in the ways he wanted to be occupied?

**Coralie:** Yes.

Margaret: And you can't remember your mother saying he should be doing more around the house or arguments over what he did?

**Coralie:** No. Only arguments over money.

Margaret: Were you present when this happened?

**Coralie:** Often. It frightened me. If they got beyond what I could cope with I would go for a walk around the block. I am still not very good with arguments.

Margaret: When you say arguments - what was the nature of them - were they violent?

**Coralie:** No. Verbal. Words. Generally mother wanted more than father could afford. Or mother would spend money in ways that he didn't approve of. She was much more middle class in her desires.

Margaret: When you make that distinction between the two, how did their behaviour become evident in that sort of way that makes you say he was much more working class?

**Coralie:** His attitude. He always acted as though mum was better than him.

Margaret: So he felt that keenly?

**Coralie:** I think so. I think he felt mum had married beneath her.

Margaret: Was that an attitude that respective families held as well?

**Coralie:** We didn't have much to do with either family.

Margaret: How did they come to marry then?

**Coralie:** They were both in the Salvation Army.

Margaret: Talking about your father cooking the Sunday lunch - how many meals a day would you have eaten?

Coralie: We had three meals a day. I used to come home from school for lunch. Mum would be there.

In some ways she was a funny sort of mother and yet in other ways she didn't want me in school mixing with the other children. And so she'd have me come home to lunch. I think that's probably the Christian bit. So I always came home for lunch and nearly every time I had a boiled egg. I suppose it would be at least seven minutes home, seven minutes back.

Margaret: Would you have anything to go with the boiled egg?

Coralie: Piece of bread and butter and a drink probably. We had a cow so I guess I had milk.

Margaret: What, you kept it in the backyard?

Coralie: Yes. When my father lost his job, with the last money he got he bought a cow. We had an acre of land and fruit trees and he had a really good vegetable garden because he came from a farm. He used to make butter and once he made cheese.

Margaret: What form of refrigeration did you have?

Coralie: Ice blocks or a Coolgardie safe with a wet bag over it. I don't think we had an ice chest during the Depression, I don't think we would have been able to afford the ice.

Margaret: What sort of things would you have for breakfast and what time would you eat breakfast?

Coralie: For breakfast we would have sop - perhaps because my father was a baker - but all of our family always had sop. My youngest brother still sometimes makes himself sop for supper. You cut bits of bread, a little bit of sugar over it and then some hot milk and boil it. Little cubes of bread, little bit of sugar and hot milk over it. And that is quite nice.

Margaret: And that's all you'd have?

Coralie: Well instead of a cereal we'd just have that. As a special treat - sometimes we'd have porridge but mainly it was sop?

Margaret: Winter and summer?

Coralie: Yes.

Margaret: Did you have tea with it or milk?

Coralie: Milk I think. Children didn't have tea in our family. And a piece of toast we'd probably have. And I had my egg at lunch time and we'd always have a good evening meal.

Margaret: What would you have?

Coralie: Sausages. Actually during the Depression I did the marketing and for a large part of the Depression I used to go down and buy, three pound of sausages for eleven pence halfpenny I think it was and so I used to go with

two shillings - I would get three pound of sausages and a shilling's worth of steak - the steak was for mother and we used to eat the sausages.

Margaret: And no one would complain or ask why?

Coralie: The butcher asked me once if the steak was for me. I said 'No, mother'.

Margaret: Did you think it was unusual?

Coralie: No. Nobody thought it was unusual.

Margaret: What about your father?

Coralie: He might have had some of it but she couldn't eat sausages.

Margaret: What age were you then?

Coralie: I would have been in grade 6 I think - after my brother was born.

Margaret: You always paid - it was never on credit?

Coralie: Always paid. I used to walk down to where the Jam Factory is from Joslin and the butcher was across the road from the Jam Factory. I used to walk right up to Payneham for cheap bread. I think it was three loaves of bread for a shilling. It didn't go on for very long but I know I complained about having to do both lots of shopping.

Margaret: Would this have been after school?

Coralie: Yes. Friday afternoon.

Margaret: And you would have paid money for the bread too?

Coralie: Yes.

Margaret: You said before that your mother would have had the pianola on credit - you didn't have foodstuffs on credit - did you have other things on credit?

Coralie: No.

Margaret: The evening meal - your father was or wasn't there?

Coralie: It depended. No, he would always be there because he used to come home, go to bed, sleep more or less .... one of the reasons I wasn't allowed to have children home was because my father was a shift worker and he used to get up just in time for tea. And he used to spend the time from tea on with us. Then he'd generally go to bed about 8.30.

During the Depression sometimes he was lucky and he would get a job on Friday nights because they used to have a double shift.

Margaret: Did you have rabbit to eat?

Coralie: Yes, sometimes there would be a person who'd come round selling rabbits.

Margaret: What about fish?

Coralie: One of my treats when I went home to lunch was when we had herrings in sauce.

Margaret: Basically the food was what kind of meat?

**Coralie: We had corned beef sometimes, stews - good stews.**

Margaret: What do you mean by good stews?

**Coralie: Stews were something you looked forward to - they were better than sausages because they had lots of vegetables and sometimes dad would put dumplings on top.**

Margaret: What about chicken?

**Coralie: No. Chicken was Christmas dinner.**

Margaret: Easter?

**Coralie: No. Hot cross buns at Easter. Now and again if a chook needed its head chopped off - but generally they left the slaughter until Christmas.**

Margaret: Well you kept hens then just for the eggs?

**Coralie: Yes.**

Margaret: Would you sell the eggs?

**Coralie: No. Mother would barter but certainly not sell.**

Margaret: What about sweets or puddings?

**Coralie: Yes. I don't know whether we had it every night. Sometimes we had stewed fruit in the summer.**

Margaret: You mentioned the very big acreage that you had - what sorts of things were you able to use from that?

**Coralie: Apricot trees, plum trees, peach trees, grapes. Dad during the Depression grew some gherkins and sold them at the Jam Factory, pumpkins, beans, marrow, spinach, cabbages, tomatoes - all of those things.**

Margaret: So you were fairly self-sufficient as far as they go?

**Coralie: Yes. It was a question of necessity but also it was a question of pride for my father.**

Margaret: Of maintaining a family?

**Coralie: Yes.**

Margaret: He would look after all these things?

**Coralie: Yes. This was his way of managing during the Depression. Buying a cow with the last of his money - he was going to be alright, he had this big piece of land and he could grow things.**

Margaret: What did your mother think when he bought the cow?

**Coralie: I can't remember. We thought it was funny. He did all the milking.**

Margaret: Would he bake bread.

**Coralie:** He did sometimes but not as a regular thing.

**Margaret:** Did your mother?

**Coralie:** No. I walked up to Payenham to get cheap bread. That was cheaper than making it. Now and again he'd make it.

**Margaret:** Would someone preserve the fruit?

**Coralie:** No. It was all fresh. I think he might have tried drying apricots once.

**Margaret:** You didn't make your own jam?

**Coralie:** Yes. We did that. I don't think we went without food during the Depression. I can remember going without luxuries. I can remember one of my birthdays my father must have gone up to do the grocery shopping, I kept looking at those little frogs, chocolate frog cakes - they used to sell half a dozen of those in a little box, pink and chocolate and apricot - and I used to look at these and drool.... I think they were sixpence halfpenny for the whole set - I would say 'Can we have those?' - well, the only birthday present that I can remember ever is having a box of those cakes. That is the only birthday present I can ever remember getting. We got others but it is the only one I remember and the best part about it was everybody else was drooling because they all wanted some. (Laughs)

I don't think I ate them all but the idea was I could have my pick because it was my birthday present and if I wanted to I could eat the whole lot myself but I would like to think I shared with the others but I am not sure. (Laughter)

**Margaret:** And he gave them to you?

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** And your mother would have agreed with that?

**Coralie:** I don't know. He knew how much I wanted them and for how long I wanted them. I had never tasted them before.

**Margaret:** And it lived up to expectations?

**Coralie:** Yes. I still buy one from time to time.

**Margaret:** You were talking about your mother before having the steak - who would have the largest portion?

**Coralie:** I think it would go on age - I am sure my father would have had the largest helping. My mother a small helping.

**Margaret:** It wasn't small because there wasn't enough?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** Why was she such a small eater?

**Coralie:** She had been very sick. And then I would imagine the boys may have had two sausages and my sister and I one.

**Margaret:** Were you allowed to talk during your meals?



**Coralie:** Yes. We always said grace. And that was it.

**Margaret:** Did you have a choice of how much on your plate you could eat?

**Coralie:** No. I don't think it was a problem if you finish everything because there was always somebody else wanting to eat what you didn't.

**Margaret:** If you hadn't wanted to eat that meal another one wouldn't have been prepared?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** When would you leave the table?

**Coralie:** More or less wait until everyone was finished.

**Margaret:** We were talking before about deliveries - apart from the rabbit person - anyone else come that your mother would buy from?

**Coralie:** That was more a middle class sort of thing - the people who had income during the Depression. It was mainly people who were unemployed who would go round with the rabbits but it was not part of our life to have deliveries. Even the iceman - we didn't have an ice chest during the Depression.

**Margaret:** But they would service your street - it was just your choice not to.

**Coralie:** I suppose so.

**Margaret:** What about medicines and things?

**Coralie:** Never went to the doctor. My father didn't believe in doctors. Anything that happened they had old fashioned remedies for. For sore throats you had a spoonful of sugar with a drop of kerosene in it. Any cut or anything that needed healing you held it in front of the fire - the fire would draw out any pus - a stomach ache would be paraffin (pause). Actually we were quite a healthy lot.

**Margaret:** If you had had to send for the doctor it would have cost money for that?

**Coralie:** All the time I can remember we never ever sent for the doctor. I was very sick at one stage - sicker than normal and they took me to the Children's Hospital - that's where you would normally go if you were sicker than you ought to be.

**Margaret:** What was wrong with you?

**Coralie:** I think I had ... you know, scalding of the urine. At the Children's Hospital I got some medicine. I can't remember really.

**Margaret:** Did you grow flowers?

**Coralie:** There were rose bushes in the front. There was more or less the garden from the old farmhouse but I don't think they did a great deal with it.

**Margaret:** You didn't sell them?

**Coralie:** No. I used to make perfume out of them.

**Margaret:** How did you do that?

**Coralie:** I used to pick them on a Sunday morning when my father was in the kitchen doing lunch and put them in jam tins and water and boil them up on the stove. The rose petals - used to smell awful and then to improve it I used to pinch my mother's perfume.

**Margaret:** What about clothes.

**Coralie:** I always had hand-me-downs because I was the youngest girl. I was 12 before I remember having a new dress.

**Margaret:** What about your sister's clothes then - were they made for her or bought?

**Coralie:** Some hand-me-downs but I think mainly they would have been bought.

**Margaret:** Your mother didn't sew?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** Who would mend the clothes?

**Coralie:** I guess she would.

**Margaret:** Did you have many clothes?

**Coralie:** No. I don't think she did much in the way of mending. You wouldn't have enough clothes to go through the whole week unless we washed in between times. Nowhere near as many clothes as people have today. We always had a good set for Sunday. And you had good shoes too.

**Margaret:** So you'd always wear shoes to school?

**Coralie:** Yes. We would never be allowed anywhere without shoes. We were income-wise working class but in aspirations we were middle class.

**Margaret:** So she would have seen to it that you were fitted out?

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** What about mending your shoes?

**Coralie:** Sometimes father would mend them.

**Margaret:** Did you have a warm overcoat in winter?

**Coralie:** I can remember having an overcoat but I think they were always too small for me. But I can also remember putting cardboard in my shoes and having my feet wet going home and then replacing the cardboard with new bits.

**Margaret:** Would you have one pair of shoes per year or what?

**Coralie:** I think I had shoes when my sister outgrew them.

**Margaret:** They were hand-me-downs?

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** When you talked about special clothes - what would you wear?

**Coralie:** Generally a skirt and jumper. I always had the impression of being poorly dressed. My image of myself is that I always had shabby and tatty clothes.

**Margaret:** Would other children remark on them?

**Coralie:** I don't know but I always thought I was deprived where clothes were concerned.

**Margaret:** How were your parents dressed?

**Coralie:** My mother was a very fashionable lady. My father wore a bowler hat. They were both bits of characters really when you think about it.

**Margaret:** Maintaining their image was important to them?

**Coralie:** Yes. Mother always dressed very well.

**Margaret:** What about the circle of people they moved with?

**Coralie:** They didn't have a circle (pause) we didn't have people who came regularly to the house. Not even relations. Because my father's relations were in New South Wales, my mother's in Victoria.

(end of side 1)

**Mrs. C. Green - Tape 1, Side 2**

(On attire, appearance ....)

**Coralie:** Didn't think of them as ever being sloppy. But I think it was the hand-me-downs that really got me. And also I guess that was part of the feeling of being not wanted. There were two brothers and a sister - my mother was very sick, she was told never to have any more children and then I came and I think I knew that and I always felt not as important as the others.

**Margaret:** You said before that the financial decisions were the only arguments you could remember. Would your mother consult with your father before she spent money?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** Did he hand over his money?

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** Would he have kept some for himself?

**Coralie:** Yes. Later on he didn't but when I was a child he did. Later on he used to just give her so much - when she went out and did paid work - that was during the War.

**Margaret:** But until that time she organised how much she spent on food, clothing etc?

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** You said you thought you were born in a kind of nursing home.

**Coralie:** Yes. I certainly wasn't born in a hospital - it might have been a private hospital but I think it was more a private nursing home where women used to go to have their children. In Harrow Road, St. Peters, it was one of those lovely old villas.

**Margaret:** You were never told the midwife's name?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** How do you know that your mother was told never to have any more children?

**Coralie:** This was part of our heritage - you know when your mother's sick .... she is lucky to be alive and sometime, during this lucky to be alive thing, it must have been said - 'you are lucky to be here because she was told never to have any more children' - something like that.

**Margaret:** Were your older sister and brothers born in a hospital?

**Coralie:** One was born in a hospital - I am not sure about the others.

**Margaret:** Was she sick before she had you or while carrying you?

**Coralie:** Before she had me. Three years before I was born - my sister was two when she had this really bad illness and one of the outcomes was she was told not to have any more children?

**Margaret:** How did she get sick?

**Coralie:** I think it might have been some sort of lung thing. She was teaching at the Salvation Army school at Collie, Western Australia, whether it was a coal mining thing - I gather she got some of the coal dust into her lungs and they had to remove part of her rib and take part of one lung away and then she got double pneumonia and pleurisy.

Margaret: She really was very, very ill.

**Coralie:** Yes.

Margaret: You assume that it was a midwife and no doctor there.

**Coralie:** I am almost certain.

Margaret: Was your mother well enough to feed you?

**Coralie:** I don't know.

Margaret: And no stories about that?

**Coralie:** No.

Margaret: Was she well enough to care for you when you came home from hospital?

**Coralie:** I don't know. It sounds stupid you know that I have the vaguest feeling that I was taken back to see someone when I was really very small, still a babe in arms, to this person, to show - whether I was taken around the corner to the nursing home - but I can almost remember -being shown off to someone.

Margaret: You said before that other than your mother the rest of you were a fairly healthy lot - was she fussy about hygiene and things like that?

**Coralie:** No. I don't think so.

Margaret: You said you never sent for the doctor - when you were sick that time, did you have to come home from the hospital and stay in bed or straight back to school?

**Coralie:** I can't remember.

Margaret: You can't remember any invalids lying around the house?

**Coralie:** No.

Margaret: And not with your father either?

**Coralie:** No.

Margaret: What about vaccinations?

**Coralie:** None. My father was very much anti-doctors - 'doctors know nothing, doctors kill you'.

Margaret: Where did he get that from?

**Coralie:** Perhaps from living in the country.

Margaret: Was it a self-sufficiency thing, that you took care of yourself or was it connected solely with the doctors?

**Coralie:** I think it was just anti-doctors. His mother died when he was at a very impressionable age. That was one thing where he did have an influence on my mother - where she normally made all the decisions - this was definitely my father's anti-doctor thing.

He convinced her that doctors were not necessary and she went along with it.

**Margaret:** He had a very strong position about that.

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** Would you have ever visited anyone in hospital?

**Coralie:** Once. Down near where the Botanic Gardens are now. Somebody in there had TB and was dying. And I had quite a nice singing voice and I think they intended taking me in there to sing to the patient. Because I was young I wasn't allowed in so I had to sit in the waiting room at the gate while they went in.

**Margaret:** You never got in.

**Coralie:** No. But I can remember this person had TB and was very sick. I was the only child that was taken - none of the others.

**Margaret:** What about deaths. If you didn't have a lot of family circle around were you involved in anyone's death close to you as a child?

**Coralie:** Yes. At the mission they had an Aboriginal family and my little brother - he was born nine years after me - used to play with this Aboriginal child and this little boy's name was Ernie and he got sick and died. I can remember that was quite a tragedy for the whole family, especially for my brother and myself. And then the other time two children had been tunnelling on the banks of the Torrens and the sand covered them over and they suffocated. So we were never allowed to go down to the Torrens. We were also warned when we were playing not to do this. We were told about death more as a safety thing.

**Margaret:** With the Aboriginal child, did you attend his funeral?

**Coralie:** I can't remember. I think we must have because it affected my young brother very much. For many years, because being Christian he had been told Ernie had gone to heaven with the angels. And about the same time one of the aeroplane people - either Kingsford Smith or Jimmy Melrose - crashed his plane and for two or three years my little brother had a real phobia about this and every time he heard an aeroplane he'd rush in and hide under the table. He connected Ernie's death with the aeroplane. And he thought that whenever he heard the aeroplane it was the angels coming to get him. We must have gone to the funeral, I think.

**Margaret:** You wouldn't have seen the dead body then?

**Coralie:** No. I didn't see a dead body until my mother died. Just recently - 1974.

**Margaret:** What about weddings. Do you remember ever going to weddings as a child?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** Getting back to your mother's work before she had paid employment - what would she have considered to be spare time?

**Coralie:** When I was very young they used to go and play tennis - both of them - so that would have been a Saturday afternoon.

**Margaret:** This was when you were at St. Peters?

**Coralie:** Yes. She played piano. I don't think she gardened. She used to like walking but mainly it was walking for a purpose. She'd sometime walk from St. Peters into town. But it wouldn't be just going for a walk.

**Margaret:** You said she didn't have a close circle of friends - would she have anyone she would just call in and visit for a cup of tea?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** No card parties?

**Coralie:** No. We used to play cards. We were very self-sufficient as a family. I can remember from when I was eight or something if my father and the two boys wanted to play cards and there was nobody else, I would be kept up to play. I can remember playing euchre and five hundred. We played a lot of games as a family.

**Margaret:** You couldn't ever remember her going out to enjoy herself without your dad and the children?

**Coralie:** No. She used to enjoy going out to the office.

**Margaret:** Would she have counted that as part of her interests or part of her work?

**Coralie:** Part of her work. Later on she got very politically involved. She stood for the senate. She never did trivial things as pleasure.

**Margaret:** Getting back to the work with welfare - when did that start - how old were you?

**Coralie:** That was before my brother was born - he was born in 1933. I think it would have been right at the beginning of the Depression.

**Margaret:** Did she invite herself into working in this kind of area?

**Coralie:** I think she saw the need and got an office. She used to go down to the office every afternoon in Victoria Square. They used to sing in the street. I hate the thought of it, but they did, we all did, the whole family - the boys used to play the violin.

**Margaret:** What would you sing?

**Coralie:** Hymns.

**Margaret:** Would you hand out any kind of pamphlets?

**Coralie:** No. They would take up a collection and then she'd use that money to do welfare work during the week.

**Margaret:** Where would you go to sing?

**Coralie:** You know where Myer is in Rundle Mall - at the side of Rundle Mall every Sunday night.

**Margaret:** So that was a fixed routine?

**Coralie:** Yes. Salvation Army used to be at one end and when they finished we'd start. They would preach - both her and my father.

**Margaret:** Do you remember what sorts of things they would preach?

**Coralie:** Same sort of thing as the Salvation Army. Very much like that. I don't think they saw themselves as being in opposition to the Salvation Army or I don't know why they thought they were necessary rather than the Salvation Army. I don't know that they had anything better to offer. I think they thought the Salvation Army were too conservative because they were against smoking, lipstick and things like that. They thought they were a little bit more liberated.

**Margaret:** What about gambling?

**Coralie:** I don't know about mother but my dad loved to gamble.

**Margaret:** And what would he gamble on?

**Coralie:** Mainly horses. He would like to go to the races, see the horses and decide on the horse flesh before he put money on it.

**Margaret:** He wouldn't bet with an off course place?

**Coralie:** No. I don't know about when I was a child - I think it was later on.

**Margaret:** What about alcohol in the family?

**Coralie:** Never.

**Margaret:** Would your parents frequent places where liquor was served?

**Coralie:** Yes. They just wouldn't have any.

**Margaret:** Did they explain to you why?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** And in later life if you had a drink would they have been disappointed?

**Coralie:** No. I think it was what they were brought up to believe. All of us are social drinkers but not even my brothers drink to excess. Only social drinkers to make ourselves sociably acceptable. We don't really like it. I would much rather a glass of lemonade than a glass of champagne.

**Margaret:** What about your father - what would he have counted as leisure times?

**Coralie:** Later on he used to go to the races. Sometimes he'd go fishing and some Sundays we used to go up to Gawler for a family picnic.

**Margaret:** How did you get to Gawler?

**Coralie:** They had a car. Not all the time but when we did have a car. Sometimes he had a horse and buggy.

**Margaret:** When did you move from St. Peters?

**Coralie:** At the end of Grade 7. I think my mother stood for Parliament and didn't get in and I think she couldn't face up to having failed and I think we went to Victoria to live then. And also dad was having trouble getting a job.



Margaret: So what age were you when you went to Victoria?

**Coralie: Thirteen.**

Margaret: How long were you in Victoria for?

**Coralie: Practically for the rest of my life until 1966 when I came here. We might have come back once after that - yes, we were living at Dulwich. We went to Victoria when I was thirteen - I left school at thirteen and a half. Had a job over in Victoria and then at some stage when I was about fourteen we came back to South Australia. I was given the option of going back to school but I didn't.**

Margaret: If you didn't have a big circle of friends or relatives - how did you get on with neighbours?

**Coralie: I think the neighbours looked down on us. They thought they were all better than us. They were mainly public servant-type people.**

Margaret: That was for social reasons rather than your parents' religious beliefs?

**Coralie: I think so - I think a combination.**

Margaret: So there wasn't any socialising with the neighbours?

**Coralie: There'd be a passing of time of day.**

Margaret: Not in their house?

**Coralie: No.**

Margaret: Sundays you had, in the evening in the city - when were Church services?

**Coralie: That would be it.**

Margaret: How would you spend your Saturdays?

**Coralie: They might have gone into the market. Apart from that I think Saturday the boys might have played some sport.**

Margaret: Organised sport?

**Coralie: Yes. When the boys were playing in teams we would all go and watch them. We would generally follow wherever they were playing.**

Margaret: You weren't involved in sport?

**Coralie: I was later at school - about Grade 6.**

Margaret: What did you play?

**Coralie: Netball. Not a going away school team - I wasn't good enough for that. We used to have school sports days.**

Margaret: What about Saturday nights.

**Coralie: When the boys got older they would go out. Saturday nights we'd just stay home.**

Margaret: Would you listen to the wireless or play piano?

**Coralie:** Generally we'd have the pianola and sing. That was our main family activity.

**Margaret:** Card games?

**Coralie:** No. That would be other nights.

**Margaret:** During the week?

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** Just the family?

**Coralie:** As they got older my brothers would bring their friends in.

**Margaret:** How about your parents attending a church .....

**Coralie:** That happened too, early on. They were in the Salvation Army, then they were part of the Spicer Memorial Church, St. Peters, and then they had their mission. I was christened in the Spicer Memorial Church.

**Margaret:** Religion was obviously of central importance to both your parents.

**Coralie:** To start with. But I think it diminished in importance as time went on.

**Margaret:** Why?

**Coralie:** It didn't diminish in importance for my mother but I think perhaps my father became more worldly. I would imagine as he became more interested in the races he became less interested in religion and also I think he had conflict of interest with the Trade Union movement. I am sure that he may have had something of a political future with the Trade Union Movement if he hadn't had the religious bit.

**Margaret:** That was seen as in conflict?

**Coralie:** Yes. He was highly respected as a Trade Unionist, a man of principle but unfortunately he also had the Christian bit.

**Margaret:** What kind of role did religion play for you?

**Coralie:** I think we just believed it. Believed what you were taught. I can remember a couple of times being on a soap box and having a few sermons as part of my play but it never became part of my play acting as much as playing school. Playing school was the main thing I did always.

**Margaret:** So that was a stronger influence?

**Coralie:** Yes. I think so. Probably because I picked up the vibes that one of the reasons we weren't very acceptable in society was religion. I picked that up very early on.

**Margaret:** Did you ever say that to your parents?

**Coralie:** No. I don't think so. What I can remember about the mission - I was about Grade 4 - the worst thing you could ever imagine that you'd see a child from school come there and I would try very hard to hide behind my sister or brother. I can remember that time saying something to my parents. I was told 'this is what we do for Jesus' or something like that.

Margaret: Given your sensitivity to where your parents related socially, what about in relationship to other religious organisations? Were you aware of any antagonism?

**Coralie:** No. I think they were pretty tolerant. Never ever did we get any messages about other religions were to be criticised or condemned. Even though a lot of the other kids would yell 'Yeh! Yeh! the Catholics' - I wouldn't.

Margaret: You were taught to respect people's religious beliefs, whatever denomination?

**Coralie:** Yes.

Margaret: What about playing games on Sundays - was that a 'no no'.

**Coralie:** It started off being very much a 'no no' and gradually diminished a lot. But to start off with almost you weren't allowed to do anything on Sundays. Knitting at one stage I can remember wasn't allowed on Sundays. I think my parents were probably a bit progressive, even with their religion.

Margaret: What about Christmas then - how was Christmas portrayed to you and how did you celebrate?

**Coralie:** We had chicken, Christmas Dinner - that was about it. We had a really nice Christmas dinner - chicken for dinner, roast vegetables and plum pudding. But gifts were definitely not much part of it until I was about ... I remember one Christmas present I got when I was about twelve - a baby doll. Not significant for the age I was - it didn't mean anything. I guess we got a gift at Christmas - I can't remember any particular gift that I got.

Margaret: Would it have been a toy or clothes?

**Coralie:** I really can't remember. I suppose we wrote a letter to Father Christmas like everyone else but I am sure whatever we wrote mum had in the cupboard. We were conned somehow into asking for what we were going to get.

Margaret: The Father Christmas story was allowed?

**Coralie:** Yes.

Margaret: What about Christmas tree and decorations?

**Coralie:** I think sometimes we had a tree. Generally it would be a branch off a tree.

Margaret: What about gifts being given to other people or just an exchange of best wishes?

**Coralie:** No. There would be singing carols and we also went out around singing carols too as a family.

Margaret: Would you be given anything in return?

**Coralie:** Sometimes we'd get lemonade or cake. Singing Christmas carols was something I quite liked.

Margaret: You'd do that in the neighbourhood or go into the city?

**Coralie:** Sometimes people would ask for us to go because someone was sick - outside hospitals or places my father knew would give a good donation.

Margaret: You mentioned that birthdays weren't celebrated much....

**Coralie:** Every time for a birthday we had a cake with candles and probably something special for tea but gifts were not significant.

**Margaret:** So you can't remember any one particular gift?

**Coralie:** No. I can remember the one Christmas gift - the baby doll when I was twelve which I wasn't impressed with and then the cakes I told you about before. I guess I got other things because I did have a doll and a pram. Mainly I think I was disappointed in what I was given because it wasn't what I wanted.

**Margaret:** What about friends - were they allowed to come over for birthday parties?

**Coralie:** I never had a birthday party. I don't think any of the others did either. My sister had one when she turned eighteen because she was getting engaged. Because her birthday is on the 15th of July and mine on the 1st I was told it was part of my birthday too and I think I might have been allowed to have one friend there.

**Margaret:** Would your mother have a cake for your birthday?

**Coralie:** Yes. We would all have a cake for our birthday and a family tea.

**Margaret:** So obviously you never played party games on your birthday.

**Coralie:** No. I don't think I went to any parties either as a child.

**Margaret:** Was that because the reciprocal bit wasn't there?

**Coralie:** I think so.

**Margaret:** So you weren't ever invited to one?

**Coralie:** I don't think so.

**Margaret:** What about Easter - how was that celebrated?

**Coralie:** I guess we were given a small egg but again it wasn't a big deal. Aunties were in Sydney or Melbourne and we didn't have a great deal of contact with them.

**Margaret:** What about the Easter Bunny thing.

**Coralie:** No. Easter Bunny wasn't significant. Perhaps at school - perhaps we made cards or something - if Easter Bunny came into my life at all it would have been through a teacher at school.

**Margaret:** What about New Year?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** Was it celebrated at all?

**Coralie:** I can't remember. We did have the tooth fairy.

**Margaret:** And you can remember losing teeth.

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** What would the tooth fairy bring?

**Coralie:** Threepence usually. But you always got something.

**Margaret:** What about your parents' wedding anniversary - were they ever celebrated?

**Coralie:** No. You'd know. You'd be told but there was no celebrating.

**Margaret:** So anniversaries of any other kind weren't celebrated either?

**Coralie:** No. Although I was always reminded when my grandmother died because it was the day before my birthday. I had never met her, she died long before I was alive but I was told it was the day before my birthday.

**Margaret:** What about Empire Day?

**Coralie:** Yes. We knew about Empire Day. Sometimes we'd have crackers and fireworks. Not very many but some. Especially after my brothers started to go to work.

**Margaret:** What about Guy Fawkes' night - were you allowed to be involved in that?

**Coralie:** More so with my younger brother who was born in 1933.

**Margaret:** Would he join with his friends or would you just have....

**Coralie:** We'd have it because of him. So the older children, depending where you were in the family, so what I am talking about wouldn't be the same for my brother who is nine years younger. So there was a change ... partly because the older children knew what was happening outside so it would gradually come in to our family.

**Margaret:** Did you learn to play the piano?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** How about your brothers' violin - were they taught?

**Coralie:** Yes. We all had music lessons.

**Margaret:** You were on the violin too?

**Coralie:** Yes. The eldest brother and sister both started having lessons to play the piano. They both only had about one term's lesson but wouldn't continue practising. So then we were put to the violin and because it was part of the mission - they played violin - they all had a few lessons. When it came my turn I badly wanted to play the piano but because that had been tried and was no good I had to learn the violin too. I had probably the most lessons of any of them.

**Margaret:** Who did you learn from?

**Coralie:** Miss Hackendorf.

**Margaret:** Carmel ...

**Coralie:** Not Carmel - her sister or aunt.

**Margaret:** How could your parents afford that?

**Coralie:** We did. I suppose some of the money might have come out of the mission. That's why I say I am not quite sure about what happened with all this money but certainly I had violin lessons.

**Margaret:** What about the instruments - did you own them?

**Coralie:** Yes. We all had violins. On Saturday mornings I am walking down to my music lesson I am passing a Church hall where everyone is doing tap dancing and of course you know what I really want to be doing, I want to be in there kicking up my heels and doing sinful things like tap dancing etc.

**Margaret:** Did you stop and watch?

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** That sort of dancing was really frowned on?

**Coralie:** Yes. I would have made a really wonderful tap dancer.

**Margaret:** And yet you knew not to ask them?

**Coralie:** I did ask once.

**Margaret:** What were you told?

**Coralie:** I think they couldn't afford it.

**Margaret:** What about books in the house?

**Coralie:** No. I probably had a few books. I got a few prizes - they were books and perhaps some of the aunts might have sent us books as a present.

**Margaret:** Your parents wouldn't have bought you books?

**Coralie:** No. I didn't even know a library existed. Even at school I had never been told there was a local library.

**Margaret:** So your parents didn't borrow from the library?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** What about magazines?

**Coralie:** Yes we had the 'Christian Herald' every week but that was because mother liked it.

**Margaret:** What about papers - daily and weekly?

**Coralie:** We would have papers. I was very au fait with what was happening politically. I guess I was more knowledgeable than most children about social events and things.

**Margaret:** So where did you get your knowledge from?

**Coralie:** From my parents.

**Margaret:** So it was a verbal thing?

**Coralie:** Yes.

Margaret: What was their source?

Coralie: Papers and the radio I guess. I knew all about the Jack Lang and the banks and about .... not wanting to pay back the British banks in the Depression and all that. Somehow there was all this knowledge happening at the tea table. I can definitely remember the discussion between my mother and father (long pause) I didn't know a great deal but I knew the names and I knew who the goodies were and who the baddies were.

Margaret: Would your father subscribe to Trade Union type magazines or literature?

Coralie: He was on the Trade's Council for the Bakers Union Committee all his life so that would be one thing he would do in his leisure time. Go to the meetings. Whether he actually belonged to the Labor Party or not I don't know but he was certainly a very active Trade Unionist.

Margaret: Was there any kind of reading aloud from parents to child?

Coralie: Only The Bible. When I was younger, but then that faded out too.

Margaret: Were you expected to read the bible when you were able to read?

Coralie: I think it was left up to you individually. They believed that you were in charge of your own soul and they let you know what they believed but you were in charge. I never felt that I was being pushed.

Margaret: Coercion was obviously not in a overt form at all?  
(Long pause.)

Margaret: Your mother then would not I should imagine use magazines or books on advice as to how to bring up children?

Coralie: No.

Margaret: And she had no other people to discuss how other people were bringing up their children?

Coralie: I think she just felt it was an instinctive thing. I think in some ways they were very much ahead of their time. I can't ever remember ever being hit by either of them. I can remember once being sent into my room because my older brother said I had said 'damn'. And I said I hadn't and I hadn't. I can remember feeling very upset at being punished for something I didn't do. The boys would have been hit.

Margaret: What would they have to have done to be punished?

Coralie: I don't know with the eldest one. But I think dad was much harder on the eldest one than the younger ones. Alf I think was rather a difficult kid at school, I think he was always questioning authority and wanting his own way. I think because physical punishment didn't work with him, in fact it made him more antagonistic, the rest of us it was never tried on. It's interesting I never ever hit my daughter either. I think I did once when she put some lipstick on the wall and I gave her a smack on the tail but that was the only time I can ever remember.

Margaret: What about things like the Agricultural Show - would you have gone to that?

Coralie: Yes.

Margaret: So you weren't denied those things?

**Coralie:** No. We would go as a family together. We did lots of things together as a family. Beach. Gawler. Football. But we would know the financial limits of the family. We'd all have a pie or a pastie or you could have half of each if you could get someone to share it with you, we'd have one bottle of drink between us and we'd all watch to see that nobody had more than their share. That was the outing. We never asked for anything else.

**Margaret:** What about places like the Art Gallery, Museum?

**Coralie:** No. Never.

**Margaret:** Circus?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** Would you have been allowed to?

**Coralie:** I think so. Because my father as a boy worked in the circus.

**Margaret:** What about plays, vaudeville?

**Coralie:** Once my mother took us down to the St. Peters Town Hall because the Maoris were coming in. I think I was the only one that went - just my mother and myself.

**Margaret:** What about picture theatres?

**Coralie:** I used to ask to go because the other children used to go. Financially they wouldn't have afforded it. I did go when I was about thirteen - that was the first time. I remember being scared when the lights went out.

**Margaret:** What did you think?

**Coralie:** I don't remember. I was frightened when the lights went out.

**Margaret:** Did your parents play games with you - like hopscotch?

**Coralie:** No. We did play cards. Even when we were much younger I can remember there was a game that they made themselves called Buy 1 and Buy 2 - maybe like bingo - but it was with numbers.

**Margaret:** It was a board game was it?

**Coralie:** A home made game - I can't remember much of it. We used to play snakes and ladders.

**Margaret:** Ludo?

**Coralie:** Yes. They had Ludo - I didn't like that much. And card games. I used to make a game myself because I had all this money from the collection and I used to have a wonderful time because they'd give me a pile of money - I would have all this money in rows, have it as a school or have it as bank and I had a circle and (pause) dancing around and I used to play for hours at night with that. Then at bedtimes I'd give the money back.

**Margaret:** What kind of social class do you think they saw themselves as being part of?

**Coralie:** My mother no doubt would have said she was middle class because she had gone to secretarial college and she was always telling us she had been a secretary. Because her parents had been Salvation Army Officers and they had become Salvation Army officers themselves, they would have thought they



were middle class. Because Salvation Army officers helped the working classes.

Margaret: Were you ever aware of what the income was?

Coralie: No. Never.

Margaret: Your parents never had any inherited money?

Coralie: No.

Margaret: How did they get to live in St. Peters?

Coralie: We always had the pianola or piano. There were certain standards. No way would you live in - working class suburbs. Their aspirations were definitely middle class.

Margaret: Within the area at St. Peters - were there any other families known to you that perhaps you felt sat awkwardly with the others?

Coralie: Not with the neighbourhood, but with the school. At school we knew the kids from Hackney were different from us. Just in the same way as I was different from the others whose parents were public servants. My best girlfriend - her father worked in the railways - he was only a clerk - but she had status.

Margaret: What did you used to think of the Hackney children?

Coralie: East Adelaide was a very good school because there was a social conscience and during the depression one thing that was said was that too many children were throwing away part of their lunch. If they didn't want to eat what they brought from home, they were to put it on a table in the centre of the shelter shed and people would sit around and eat - anybody at all could eat the food from the table. Of course what happened, it became a swap table.

Margaret: So it wasn't a charity?

Coralie: No, some people might have little brown marmite sandwiches and they'd rather have something else so they would quickly swap. I think some of the parents who were working, I have heard since, packed two lunches - one for the child to eat and one to put on the table.

(End of tape 1)

**Mrs. C. Green - Interview I (con't) Tape II**

Margaret: Within where you lived were there any streets or parts at St. Peters that were considered to be the poorer end?

**Coralie: No. I think very much outward appearances were kept up no matter how much hardship there might have been.**

Margaret: You said you don't think your father was officially a member of the Labor Party - your Mother?

**Coralie: No. She was an Independent.**

Margaret: Your father would have voted Labor - how would your mother have voted?

**Coralie: Labor.**

Margaret: So there was a large emphasis on discussing politics - so you were involved?

**Coralie: Yes.**

Margaret: You said why they voted for something - did they ever explain why they voted Labor?

**Coralie: I think it would be because of their Salvation Army and the work with the poor and the poor were that way because they were exploited by the bosses. But they were definitely, especially mother, anti communist - very very strongly anti communist - partly because of the Christian thing.**

**I have the feeling that my father probably thought that the communists were alright.**

Margaret: Would they have known about Karl Marx and what Soviet Communism was?

**Coralie: They knew about the Red and White Russians.**

Margaret: And in the period we are talking about - would they have talked about Stalin?

**Coralie: No... This was before. I have a feeling my father would have been more Left than my mother.**

Margaret: He held actual party positions in the Trade Union?

**Coralie: He was on committees of the Trade Union and when they had a Royal Commission into day baking he was one of the people that gave evidence. He was highly respected within his own Baker's Union because it was felt he had suffered for the Union and people respected him for that.**

Margaret: Was he ever given financial support from others because of his blacklisting?

**Coralie: No. I don't think so.**

Margaret: And he never held political meetings or party meetings at home.

**Coralie: No. It was only as I got older that I realised he must have done this because I knew what he was doing with the Union. But that wasn't obvious.**

Margaret: With your mother - there would never have been any antagonism to women in political divisions - voting, having similar sort of rights?

**Coralie:** She was a bit of a conundrum. Because she felt it was alright for her and yet when my time came she was never supportive or encouraging. She thought she was unique. She didn't want it for all women she just wanted it for herself.

**Margaret:** Her getting into the Senate was for her to do some sort of good, it wasn't to make the way better for women?

**Coralie:** No. She was no feminist.

**Margaret:** What motivated her then?

**Coralie:** She was a very good public speaker. Apparently there was a choice between both of them for a political career at this stage, and my father said a woman needs to be in politics - you've got a good chance, so you go. He was more the feminist. He said there needs to be a woman in Parliament - he was very encouraging and supportive of her. Whereas I feel if they had made the other choice he would have got in with Trade Union support he'd have had Labor Party backing. My mum stood as an Independent.

**Margaret:** Do you think it was because she was a woman she didn't get in or because she was the woman?

**Coralie:** I think if she hadn't had the Christian thing she would have. Because she kept linking politics with religion and that doesn't work. God was guiding her, she was going to get into Politics....

**Margaret:** So it was your father you think had a greater understanding of women's 'place' in the world.

**Coralie:** I think so. On looking back he taught me as a young girl how to mend the ends on the electric cords - he taught me a lot of things which as I have been a widow for many years, and I was left with Sue to bring up when she was 10 months old, many of things I found I had to do I could because my father had taught me. He thought it was necessary for a woman to be able to be self sufficient around the home.

**Margaret:** Your parents were involved both in domestic politics - what about affairs outside Australia?

**Coralie:** I don't think so.

**Margaret:** It wasn't just State but Australia-wide?

**Coralie:** Australia-wide.

**Margaret:** Were your parents openly affectionate to you and your brothers and sisters?

**Coralie:** Not in the way that most families are. Kissing was definitely not part of our ... you wouldn't kiss your mother goodbye before you went out. When I was very little, the sort of affection was they'd be sitting near me, I'd get a pat or a ruffle of the hair or something but nothing more than that. When I was younger, perhaps sitting on father's knee, but more or less we were weened of affection very young - by the time we went to school we were standing on our own feet very much.

**Margaret:** No hugging?

**Coralie:** No. Tucking into bed. But that also didn't go on very long.

**Margaret:** Why do you think it was?

**Coralie:** I think it was their Salvation Army upbringing and probably that was the way my mother was brought up.

**Margaret:** What about parents showing affection to each other?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** Any terms of endearment?

**Coralie:** No I don't think so. Yet you felt early on there was a close bond there. But then as they got older you felt they grew apart.

**Margaret:** Did you feel close to one or the other or both?

**Coralie:** I felt much closer to my father. I really always felt that my mother didn't want me.

**Margaret:** Do you think that was just a child fear of things - was there some justification?

**Coralie:** I think there was some justification because mainly the rest of the family thought she was pretty bitchy to me.

**Margaret:** What about talking easily to mother/father. Did you feel you could come home and say what you really felt about things?

**Coralie:** We had sort of open discussions. And I think probably we were listened to more than many children. I think it was a pretty open, verbal household.

**Margaret:** No secrets from each other?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** Do you think your mother and father had a particular favourite?

**Coralie:** My mother certainly favoured all the boys. The boys could do no wrong. We felt my father liked the girls better and I wouldn't say that my father showed preference to my sister or myself. Although the feeling within the family and my mother was his favourite was my elder sister but I didn't feel that way. I felt he was fairly special towards me. We would work in the garden together and I was more or less his backstop more than the boys were.

**Margaret:** Did it cause any dissension between boys and girls?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** You mentioned before that you were very frightened about the arguments - did any of your older brothers or sister ever try to intervene to stop those arguments?

**Coralie:** I don't think so. Perhaps my older brother might have. I don't know that they would have been concerned about them as I was.

One thing that really used to strike me and something I almost grew up saying to myself that when I got older I was never going to say such terrible things to anyone because you can't take them back. I used to be appalled at the sort of verbalising abuse they used to give each other. This really had an affect on me. There was no violence, physical violence but the verbal abuse I couldn't cope with.

Margaret: When they knew you were listening they didn't remove themselves to their bedroom to discuss it?

Coralie: I don't know that they did it in front of me either, I was just aware of it. I guess I would have been crying, trying to stop them in my own way and I don't know whether they said 'Go for a walk' or whether I got into the habit of disappearing when I did.

Margaret: Were you aware that there were things they would never talk about in front of you?

Coralie: No. I didn't feel that way.

Margaret: I was going to ask if adults were around talking to your parents, were you allowed to join in but you weren't exposed to that many.

Coralie: Except the Church ... in front of the Mission Hall etc. You wouldn't join in - you would just listen.

Margaret: You said before you were never physically punished but your brothers were.

Coralie: My eldest brother was, I am not sure about the other - probably both would have been physically punished by my father early on.

Margaret: What about the other brother?

Coralie: I don't think so.

Margaret: It wasn't just that he would hit boys and not girls?

Coralie: I don't think so. I don't remember.

Margaret: What about the older children, were they expected to keep you in line?

Coralie: They weren't held responsible. But they would just because we were a family. I can remember once there was some assembly at my school and my sister had heard that my name was going to be read out, for a prize, so she came at recess time and the sort of spitting on the hair and brushing it all up and heaving my pants up and pulling my dress down trying to make me respectable and telling me what I had to do. 'And don't forget to say thank you'. I can definitely remember this happening when I was in Grade 1.

Margaret: You made a very interesting comment about you felt your mother didn't envisage this new world for you that she had seen for herself - what kind of person do you think she wanted you to grow up to be?

Coralie: Well she was never supportive of the fact that I was going to go to University. I had a good job and her attitude was that I shouldn't give up the job I had to try and better myself. I suppose she wanted me to be a wife and mother. I feel that was what she wanted me to be.

Margaret: Did you feel with your older sister that she wanted similar things or more for your older sister?

Coralie: The same. She was happy for her getting engaged at eighteen, married at twenty one and it was during the Depression, but my sister was as intelligent as me at school, yet the job my mother got for her was domestic work.

Margaret: She got domestic work for your sister?

**Coralie:** Yes. And the job she got for me which I didn't take - was a job to start as an apprentice dressmaker.

**Margaret:** Was there an element of competition do you think?

**Coralie:** Looking back, I think there was.

**Margaret:** Obviously you were a very bright young girl, she must have known you had abilities that could have been fostered and yet given that....

**Coralie:** I think her feeling was that she was unique - a one off.

**Margaret:** What about your dad?

**Coralie:** He died just after I started university - he was supportive, he was thrilled that I had matriculated. I am always grateful that he lived long enough to know, and to know that I'd got a Commonwealth scholarship and was going to university. He was supportive and he was proud. Whereas my mother thought I was wasting my time.

When I think about (pause) because I was also interested in politics and things of that kind but she was never ever supportive or encouraging or even guiding as to 'if you feel that way, why don't you' - never any of that sort of conversation.

**Margaret:** What age were you when you matriculated?

**Coralie:** Twenty five.

**Margaret:** What did she say?

**Coralie:** You've got a good job, why don't you stick to it.

**Margaret:** Given that in her eyes, 'feminine' kind of occupations were fine for you and your sister, what about the boys - what were they encouraged to do?

**Coralie:** They went into an engineering shop but they weren't apprenticed because times were hard and they couldn't get apprenticed. This was the sort of work they both wanted to do.

**Margaret:** So it was their decision - she didn't find it for them?

**Coralie:** No. My second brother was very good with sign writing and drawing and she was very encouraging of him to keep going to Norwood Tech and learn to be a signwriter.

**Margaret:** What about your youngest brother?

**Coralie:** I suppose by the time he came along there were many other people having an influence on him, including myself. And I did all the right things with David. I got him into vocational guidance and had him tested and also told him what was possible because all he was interested in was sport. The vocational guidance said he had the intelligence to matriculate if he wants to and he's got the desire. I just said if you want to matriculate go on and be a phys. ed. teacher, I will help you, I will support you - that's possible. But he was always keen on just making money and did very well for himself.

**Margaret:** You were obviously an influence on him - was there any other grown-up an influence on you?

**Coralie:** At what stage?

**Margaret:** All the way through I suppose until you decided to matriculate.

**Coralie:** I think school teachers had an influence on me. I think they had more awareness of what my family background was than I gave them credit for. Every Friday afternoon we had to do sewing and I hated sewing and my teacher give me books to read every Friday afternoon - I am sure she was encouraging more academic work from me. When I think back two or three teachers at school were supportive. I suppose the main thing they gave me was that feeling of intellectual competence. Because they always made me feel I was an intelligent human being and encouraged.

But after that I suppose the greatest influence was when I joined the Air Force. Because then you did an intelligence test and I went in as a Drill instructress and very early on I was giving some of the lectures. I suddenly realised while I was in the Air Force I had a brain.

**Margaret:** It was legitimated.

**Coralie:** Yes. And then I was offered an Officer's course which was really quite incredible really.

**Margaret:** A huge accolade given the élitism and the rigid status of military institutions.

**Coralie:** Yes. So these were the things that had the greatest influence. When I came out of the air force, the person who interviewed me again said the same sort of thing - 'you have the intelligence and the ability, you can do anything'. And was quite supportive of my doing matriculation then. But I wasn't secure enough myself so I did a tertiary thing - you didn't have to matriculate - a youth leadership training course but you went to the university and did the lectures and soon as I went there and started doing some lectures on psychology, finding I could read the books alright and understand it, I wanted to go more. When I worked as a youth leader - at night - I did my matriculation during the day.

**Margaret:** What did you do as a youth leader?

**Coralie:** I worked for the YWCA in Melbourne in the girls' department. Girls' clubs. From thirteen year olds up to fifteen and then fifteen to seventeen. We'd have clubs on Monday and Tuesday nights, Wednesdays we'd have dancing with the boys from the YMCA.

**Margaret:** What were the activities?

**Coralie:** Speakers coming in. With the clubs I ran we used to go into children's homes on a Sunday afternoon. Play with kids from the children's institutions. It was again a Christian organisation but it was letting young girls know more about the world and so forth.

(Thank you Coralie)

(end of Interview 1)

**Mrs. C. Green - Interview II 12/9/88**

Pre-Recorded

Interviewing Mrs Coralie Green for the Childhood Memories project. Interviewed by Margaret Peters on the 12th of September, 1988. Interview II

Margaret: You didn't go to kindergarten did you?

**Coralie: No.**

Margaret: Did they exist around you?

**Coralie: Not that I know of.**

Margaret: Your primary school was East Adelaide?

**Coralie: I started off at St. Morris.**

Margaret: What age were you when you started?

**Coralie: Five.**

Margaret: 1929?

**Coralie: Yes. I think it was the year St. Morris started because we started off in the Church hall, the school wasn't finished?**

Margaret: Who took you to school?

**Coralie: I think my elder sister.**

Margaret: Do you remember the name of your teacher?

**Coralie: No. (laughs) But I can remember I cried and I was given these boiled fish lollies. As soon as I was given the lolly, that was it, I loved school from then on.**

Margaret: Who gave you the lolly?

**Coralie: The teacher.**

Margaret: How long were you there for?

**Coralie: I was at St. Morris I think about two years and then we went to Wellington Road School and then I went to East Adelaide.**

Margaret: What year level were you when you went to East Adelaide?

**Coralie: Grade 4.**

Margaret: So your brothers and sisters also made the move with you?

**Coralie: Yes.**

Margaret: Do you remember why you changed schools?

**Coralie: Changing houses. I don't know whether they just couldn't keep up the payments. I think what they were doing though was buying one house, selling it and moving to a better sort of house. Upgrading their houses.**



Margaret: Do you remember the houses in that kind of retrospect?

**Coralie:** They were always nice stone houses. The houses before we went to Payneham were always new - always nice houses that you felt proud to be in.

Margaret: It was a definite upward mobility for the whole family?

**Coralie:** Yes. Although I preferred the Payneham Road House, which was the old farm house with the garden etc. I think the other houses would have been a better house.

Margaret: How many schools would you have been to?

**Coralie:** Three. St. Morris, Wellington Road and East Adelaide.

Margaret: You never had any lessons at home for any reasons?

**Coralie:** No. During my last year (pause) Year seven, there was the polio epidemic and at that stage we went home early one year and were late starting the following year and we were given lessons. I got into Adelaide Tech which was a school where you had to get a certain number of marks in QC to get to and we were given lessons. Which was rather bad for people just starting.

Margaret: Why do you say that?

**Coralie:** I personally didn't do the lessons because I suppose there was no bonding with the teachers or school and so in my case I just had a longer holiday. In the two months we were supposed to be doing the lessons, I didn't do a thing. (laughter)

Margaret: Did they find out?

**Coralie:** I suppose so. I started off feeling really bad when I went there to find all these other people - everybody else had done it all and I hadn't done anything. Which also tells you something I think about my parents - my mother - she must have been vetting the lessons.

Margaret: How did you get to St. Morris?

**Coralie:** Walked.

Margaret: What was the distance approximately?

**Coralie:** About half a mile I suppose.

Margaret: Would you come home for lunch?

**Coralie:** I can't remember. I think I mainly came home after the other children had left school. I can remember having jam sandwiches at some stage but I can't remember going home for lunch when the other children were there.

Margaret: You always walked home?

**Coralie:** Yes.

Margaret: Wellington Street - the same?

**Coralie:** Wellington Road, yes.

Margaret: And East Adelaide?

**Coralie: Yes.**

Margaret: Never catching a tram?

**Coralie: No.**

Margaret: You said after you got fish lollies you liked school - did that always stay?

**Coralie: Yes.**

Margaret: What did you like about it?

**Coralie: I think it was more the teachers and the learning than the children. I don't think I was ever very popular as a child. I don't feel that I was disliked either but I was just (pause) I was never frightened of the teachers.**

Margaret: And in the three schools you felt an equal sense of belonging as far as the knowledge....

**Coralie: Yes.**

Margaret: You never had to be coerced to go to school?

**Coralie: Never.**

Margaret: Did you ever play truant?

**Coralie: Once. When I was in grade 7.**

Margaret: What did you do?

**Coralie: My girlfriend and I.... The boys were playing some interstate football match on the Adelaide Oval and we nicked off and went. I only went with my girlfriend, I wouldn't have initiated it, I wouldn't have known how to go about it. I think the teachers knew we were there - we didn't even get into trouble.**

Margaret: Back to St. Morris - what was the school like?

**Coralie: It started in the Church Hall - then we moved into the new school. Because it was a new school it was very special. I used to love the dancing and the games and all the music. I just used to love the whole thing. I think I probably was a joy to teach because I was just like a great vacuum wanting to suck up all this knowledge.**

Margaret: What was the St. Morris school like - how many children, what was the building like?

**Coralie: There were big steps that you walked up and then there was a big verandah and all the rooms went off the verandah.**

Margaret: How many rooms?

**Coralie: A room for every class. No, more than that because the boys and girls after about grade 4 or 5 - were separated. So to begin with they were mixed classes at East Adelaide up to grade 5, then separate classes for boys and girls.**

Margaret: How many children would have been at the St. Morris one?

**Coralie:** I don't know.

**Margaret:** Less than a 100?

**Coralie:** More than that. There would have been at least 25 in each class I would say.

**Margaret:** And a teacher per class.

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** What about at the Wellington Road School?

**Coralie:** I don't think I liked that one as much as the other two schools - I can't say why but when I think about it it doesn't give the same glow.

**Margaret:** Physically what was the school like?

**Coralie:** It was an older school and I guess I probably had friends at the St. Morris school and I think we were only moved because it was closer to walk to. I can't think of any other reason why.

**Margaret:** Did they have as many children?

**Coralie:** Probably more children. It was an older school. I had much greater affinity with St. Morris and East Adelaide.

**Margaret:** Was the Wellington Road one - brick, stone?

**Coralie:** Yes. Brick. I can't even remember a thing about the teachers at the Wellington Road school. Not even their names.

**Margaret:** What was the building like at East Adelaide?

**Coralie:** They seemed huge when we were there but when I've been back I have been absolutely amazed at this large playground I remembered, it is really like a pocket handkerchief.

**Margaret:** What were your play facilities at St. Morris?

**Coralie:** I think there was a monkey bar - that's all I can remember.

**Margaret:** Grass?

**Coralie:** No. I think it would have been dirt. Because it was a new school. Some of the best playing we had and I don't know whether it was in the school ground or in the paddocks near by was after rain - rainslides! Rainsliding!

**Margaret:** At St. Morris - did you share the same playground with boys?

**Coralie:** I can't remember but I doubt it very much. Although it wasn't a definite physical division to the same extent as East Adelaide was - at East Adelaide there was an actual fence dividing the boys from the girls and there used to be a lot of coming and going where there was a gap.

**Margaret:** Was there a punishment if you crossed?

**Coralie:** I don't know. I was never that interested - not until Grade 7. Then the highlight was when one of the boy's teachers - on looking back then, generally it must have been when one of the women teacher's who was away - if someone was away the girls would have to go and you'd all sit doubled up in

these two-seater desks - we loved it. We'd trapse over there and be in with the boys for the whole day. (laughter)

Margaret: Why were the girls re-located?

Coralie: I don't know but that's how it was - I can't ever remember the boys coming over to our part. Mind you they had a pre-fab over there and that was bigger. In Grade six and seven we used to jump up and down if the teacher was away. (laughter)

Margaret: Can you remember the names of any of your friends at St. Morris?

Coralie: No.

Margaret: Do you remember or feel that you had friends there?

Coralie: Yes. I used to go there with them, walk to school with them. This was the first time that I realised I didn't clean my teeth because this girl was never allowed to go to school until she cleaned her teeth and I had never known about that before. I never had a toothbrush. I was absolutely fascinated by this.

Margaret: And you never had a toothbrush?

Coralie: No. I never cleaned my teeth. I didn't even know people cleaned their teeth.

Margaret: How did you know she cleaned her teeth?

Coralie: This girl's father - I think he was a policeman - I would call for her and we'd walk to school, this day he said she wasn't ready and said she couldn't go until she cleaned her teeth. This was a new experience to me.

Margaret: Did you let on to the girl that you didn't know?

Coralie: No.

Margaret: What did it make you think about your own practices or your family's practices.

Coralie: I don't think I thought anything about it - I didn't make any comparison, I just thought I was missing out.

Margaret: Do you remember playing with her at St. Morris.

Coralie: No. I can't remember much more than the episode about cleaning the teeth.

Margaret: As a little at St. Morris - did you bring your own play things to school?

Coralie: No. I wouldn't have had anything to take.

Margaret: So you wouldn't have had a ball or a doll?

Coralie: No. I might have taken a skipping rope. But normally it'd only be a show-and-tell sort of thing.

Margaret: So you don't remember at St. Morris how you would spend play time?

Coralie: Not really at St. Morris. I can remember at East Adelaide and I think I can remember at Wellington Road. But not St. Morris.

Margaret: What were the playground facilities like at Wellington Road?

**Coralie:** Mainly dirt but there were lots of trees and we used to build houses in the roots of the tree. There were buttress roots of the tree and we were littlies - grade 2 or 3 and we'd belt out and get our spot and then we shuffled the dirt up with our feet and make all the rooms of our house and make doors and then we'd play houses. Mainly mothers because there wouldn't be any boys in the game. This would be the bedroom, this the kitchen, then we'd make the dinner.

Margaret: So you never had anything to put into the house?

**Coralie:** No. We'd put the dirt together to make the walls. And woe betide anybody who walked into the house without going through the door. We all had our houses around this tree we'd play all the recess and lunch times like that.

Margaret: How many of you?

**Coralie:** I don't know but more than six.

Margaret: Always the same group?

**Coralie:** I would imagine so - but I don't know.

Margaret: Do you remember any of their names?

**Coralie:** No.

Margaret: You've never come across them?

**Coralie:** No. We played the same sort of thing at East Adelaide too.

But then we progressed beyond that. This would be about Grade 2. About seven to eight.

Margaret: When you said you progressed beyond that - how did you know that you'd outgrown some of those things?

**Coralie:** The older girls would sort of call us babies. After a while you would outgrow it or you'd not want to play it because you didn't want to be called a baby.

Margaret: At Wellington Road what other kind of group games did you play?

**Coralie:** That's about the only thing I can remember. Skipping. Yes, skipping was played.

Margaret: Do you remember what you did?

**Coralie:** Generally on your own, each one individually with a rope with handles on it. Sometimes you'd be skipping and call somebody in but it would be a single rope. It wasn't until about Grade 3 that we'd play with a long rope - a group together.

Margaret: When you played with the long rope - what skipping games did you play?

**Coralie:** Various ones. You'd generally have a repertoire - you wouldn't play the same one all the recess time or all the lunch time. You'd often start off with just what we called 'Cockle shells', just jumping the rope as it got higher. Start off with it about an inch off the ground and then it would move

up and up and up until you got out. I don't know what the routine was as to who had to hold the rope. I think it might have been the first ones out had to hold the rope. Then they would do 'Altogether this Fine Weather' and we'd call each other in. And you'd end up with that because everyone was in, nobody was getting out then we'd do what was called Pepper at the end. So there would be a warning that it's 'One Two Three, Pepper'. That way it would end.

The thing I liked best was what we called 'Double Dutch' where you folded the rope and you had two ropes going together. But this was very difficult and a lot of people would get out early and so it wasn't a popular one unless you were very, very good at it. And generally you'd only play that if the person owning the rope wanted to play it. (laughter)

Another time - I think it was at East Adelaide - we used do a lot of jumping - high jumping and instead of just playing with the skipping rope, we used to hold the rope and instead of doing scissor sort of jumps we used to do twirly sort of jumps - one leg would go over, it was a funny sort of jump - I was really good at that. I was very small and yet at this particular game I was really good. You'd run along like this and then you'd sort of twirl like that. (Demonstrates with hands.)

Margaret: What was the surface you were playing it on?

Coralie: That was bitumen.

Margaret: Many accidents?

Coralie: I don't know - I was good at it.

Margaret: And it was never banned for being dangerous?

Coralie: I think it might have been in the end. We were getting nearly as high as ourselves. I don't think it was linked to Sports Day because we never did that on Sports day.

Margaret: So it was a game you brought in yourself.

Coralie: Yes. Somebody brought it in. I loved it because I was good at it. If you missed the rope then you were out so it was really competitive.

Margaret: Did it have a name?

Coralie: Just jump.

Margaret: Everyone had a rope at school - or did the school supply them?

Coralie: No. The school never supplied them, they were always private ropes and whoever had the rope had the power. (laughter) But there would generally only be one rope per grade. You know, it would be Brenda's rope in one grade, or someone else for another grade.

Margaret: Would all the girls join in or just those who wanted to play skipping?

Coralie: I think all the girls would be allowed to join in. East Adelaide was very good like that - I can't remember any children being banned. Even the poor, although they would probably be put at the end of the line but they would be allowed to play.

Margaret: And that happened at Wellington Road as well?

**Coralie:** I can only remember this at East Adelaide.

**Margaret:** What about things like 'Oranges and Lemons'?

**Coralie:** You'd do that more as part of your physical education with some music. We used to love the folk dancing. That used to be a class activity. We had one of those old gramophones with the wind up record - we used to play 'Gathering Peascod' (laughter) and I have never to this day known what it (Peascod) is - I still don't know. They were English folk dances. You'd have long lines, to and fro and all those things. I used to love it because of the music.

**Margaret:** Girls and boys together or just girls?

**Coralie:** I think the boys used to muck it up! (laughter) I think the boys had to do it in Grade 4. I can't remember beyond that I think they were separated.

**Margaret:** In the three schools in winter time did you have any form of heating?

**Coralie:** Yes. I can't remember about St. Morris or Wellington Road but at East Adelaide there were fire places with open fires.

**Margaret:** What about in summer?

**Coralie:** It was a stone building so I don't remember it being too hot.

**Margaret:** What about right-handed and left-handed - in any of the schools you attended do you remember whether being left handed was considered to be inappropriate?

**Coralie:** I think it depended on the teacher, rather than on the system. I know when sewing came up the left-handers were made to feel that they were the odd bods - because they were left-handed, 'no way can I help you because I can't understand how you sew'. Any left handed person, especially at sewing, would have been made to feel quite different.

**Margaret:** Was there any left-handed people in your family?

**Coralie:** My mother was but none of the children were. So I think that's why I picked up this about - I don't remember who it was but one of the girls in Grade 7 was left-handed. She had real trouble at sewing.

**Margaret:** In the three schools you went to did your parents show a great deal of, or what sort of level of, interest in your progress?

**Coralie:** The only time I think my parents came to school was when I was Dux of Grade 7 and then only my father came.

**Margaret:** Were you aware of any reason why your mother didn't come?

**Coralie:** Neither of them were going to come and I was really unhappy and crying and I guess showing my disappointment, so eventually my father came. I kept looking out to see if she'd come.

**Margaret:** Did other children in the family treat it as something special?

**Coralie:** My sister did once - I was in Grade 1 or 2 when I got a prize, she came down and made sure I looked as tidy as she could make me because I was getting a prize. I don't think they thought I was anything special.

**Margaret:** So there was no family tangible reward?

**Coralie: No.**

Margaret: What about the teachers - were you aware that they perhaps thought that your parents would come?

(end side 1)



**Mrs. Green - Interview II (con't) 12/9/88**

**Coralie:** I sensed they thought they should come.

**Margaret:** Was there ever any occasion when they asked to see your parents?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** So what was the contact between the teachers and your parents?

**Coralie:** For my family from when I started school and I don't even know if either of my parents took me the first day, I can't really remember - I think perhaps my mother took me the first day, I think that was it. But I don't think from the first day she took me that she ever had any contact with the teachers ever.

**Margaret:** What would you do if you were unwell - would you stay home?

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** Would she write a note?

**Coralie:** I suppose so. But that didn't happen - we were very healthy children.

**Margaret:** What about with your homework - who would have helped you with that?

**Coralie:** My second eldest brother used to help me. But only 'cause I was absolutely impossible at art. He was really artistic and I used to do things for him - I don't know what but somehow I used to con him into putting a nice picture on my homework but because he did that I wrote it much more neatly. He was the one who helped me with my homework. We had what was known as the honour book and the best homework of everyday - this was in Grade 7, had to repeat it that night in the honour book. One night I got the honour book and I came home, was really excited and Bert was going to a dance and he couldn't do it that night but he'd do it the next night and I said it had to be done that night otherwise people would know it's not mine. (laughter) Here he is all done up for the dance, cursing me and carrying on ' - well that's the very last time I do your homework for you - I will show you how to do it!' So from then on he showed me how to do it. (laughter)

**Margaret:** Do you remember then, if children were dishonoured, in a sense. Were they punished?

**Coralie:** The worse punishment I can remember - and I used to feel really bad about this because I used to play school at home all the time, was children who got more than four errors in their spelling - we took a spelling test every morning - and then on Friday there was the week's spelling test. They would have only, perhaps, ten words. I think it was three or four errors, they had to stand in the gutter and learn their spelling at recess time.

**Margaret:** Out in the playground?

**Coralie:** Yes. Certainly from about Grade 4, 5, 6 and 7. I used to feel really sorry about this. I used to let them cheat sometimes. (laughs)

**Margaret:** The same children obviously?

**Coralie:** All the time. I felt really bad about them.

Margaret: What sort of children would you have classified them as?

**Coralie: I just felt they couldn't do any better.**

Margaret: They weren't labelled dummies or called any names by the teachers or other children?

**Coralie: No. I don't think so. I can't remember. I don't have that feeling they were labelled. I just remember feeling sorry for them. Mind you it might only have been a token thing in the gutter and learning their spelling because I don't really remember that they stood there very long. But it was a punishment that made you not want to be in the gutter spelling.**

Margaret: What about other forms of punishment and for what reasons?

**Coralie: I can remember sometimes people being sent to the headmaster's office and I suppose they got the cane.**

Margaret: Did you?

**Coralie: No. I can only remember - I think either Wellington Road or St. Morris - somebody being caned in the classroom in front of the other children. I felt it as much as if I got it.**

Margaret: What was the cane made of?

**Coralie: Like a baton thing. I think it would have been then.**

Margaret: So you didn't have any teachers who automatically used it in the classroom?

**Coralie: No. I got the ruler on the leg once in Grade 6. I can't remember why. I only got it once.**

Margaret: Getting back to this co-educational bit - in most cases you remember them as boys and girls up until about Year 4?

**Coralie: Grade 5 I think was the last year we were mixed.**

Margaret: Then you had six and seven just girls?

**Coralie: Yes.**

Margaret: Did you always have a female teacher?

**Coralie: Yes. Always.**

Margaret: What about the boys' teacher?

**Coralie: Male.**

Margaret: Do you remember the teachers you had?

**Coralie: In Grade 4 I had Miss Hollingsworth, Grade 5 I had Miss Cullinan - she's an interesting one - she had a really bad illness and came back and taught us in a wheelchair. I can remember we had her when she wasn't in a wheelchair and then when she was. The one that slapped me on the legs, I can remember her name, (pauses) Miss Henderson, and then we had Miss Opie.**

Margaret: Were they generally encouraging of you in your schooling?

**Coralie:** Yes. I can think of nothing but praise for them. Probably even Miss Henderson - I can remember I was sick one day and she moved some children from near the fire and brought me over to sit near the fire. I don't know if this was after she hit me or not and I felt guilty but I thought she was pretty good then.

**Margaret:** When you were sick or when children were sick at school what was the policy?

**Coralie:** You'd go outside. Generally there was no place to lie down.

**Margaret:** There wasn't a sick room?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** Obviously you have such strong memories of school - can you remember when they would celebrate - Empire Day?

**Coralie:** Yes, Empire Day - I don't know about celebrations so much as just telling you all about it.

**Margaret:** There wasn't any flag-raising ceremonies?

**Coralie:** We had that every week anyway. Whether or not they raised the flag at a special time on Empire Day I don't know. But every Monday they raised the flag. I can remember Anzac Day - and November 11th - Remembrance Day - there would be special assemblies on those days.

**Margaret:** The march for Anzac Day - was there marching for Anzac Day - was that always on the day?

**Coralie:** I don't know.

**Margaret:** You wouldn't have a holiday from school for Anzac Day?

**Coralie:** I don't think so. I can't remember. But I know we were told about Gallipoli, told about the Anzacs and I know we had a special assembly. I think they used to bring an old soldier with medals along. And the kids used to wear their medals. I know I always felt left out because my father (pause) in fact I gave my father a bad time as to why he hadn't gone to the war and why didn't he have these medals so that I could wear them. His answer was that he didn't believe in war. I am sure other kids didn't have medals either. I am not a hundred percent sure why he didn't join - I am not sure whether it was because mum was sick.

**Margaret:** So it may not have been to do with his Christian beliefs?

**Coralie:** No. It might not have been. I don't really know.

**Margaret:** When these things happened at school did he ever explain to you?

**Coralie:** No.

**Margaret:** What about Arbor Day? Do you remember any rituals to do with that?

**Coralie:** Yes. My tree is still growing. I have been to the corner of First Avenue and Winchester Street and my tree is there - I have been back to check up on it. (laughter)

**Margaret:** Did you all get a tree to plant?

**Coralie:** Yes. Down First Avenue - all those trees were planted by us. (First Avenue, St. Peters.)

**Margaret:** Would you have a half holiday for that?

**Coralie:** Yes. We'd plant the trees in the morning and have the afternoon off.

**Margaret:** What about other social activities at school - did you have many school concerts at any of your schools?

**Coralie:** At St. Morris they used to have Penny Concerts - some of the classes would put on a concert and charge a penny - I think this was because it was a new school and it would help to buy equipment. I can remember at St. Morris there were lots of Penny Concerts.

**Margaret:** Who would attend?

**Coralie:** The other schools I think. Then I can remember at the end of the first year I was at St. Morris there was a big concert in the Town Hall or some hall and all the kids put on different items. And the parents came. My parents did come to that - I was wearing a new night gown and all the little girls were singing - 'How would you like to be a baby girl'.

**Margaret:** Do you remember the words?

**Coralie:** No. We must have been about five years of age. We brought the house down. I was really thrilled because I got a new night gown for that. That was a really big deal in my life!

**Margaret:** And you needed it specially for the concert.

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** Was that part of the proviso of being in it?

**Coralie:** I don't know. But I can remember the whole family coming. Perhaps the other two children were in it (the concert) too. But as far as I was concerned I was the star turn.

**Margaret:** What about concerts at Wellington Road and East Adelaide?

**Coralie:** I can't remember anything (pause) I can remember a lot of tradition at Wellington Road. We kept being told about all the famous people that had gone to that school. I think Richard Crooks went to Wellington Road School. He was a singer. There was another Australian singer - I can't remember his name.

**Margaret:** So there was an expectation....

**Coralie:** Yes. At East Adelaide in Grade 5 I think they got all the children together who played any sort of instrument and near the end of the year they had a concert, carol singing and playing instruments. Because I played the violin I can remember going to practise for that in Grade 5. Then I can remember my girlfriend and I - there was going to be a school concert and we didn't know what to do and I said 'Why don't we dress up like Maoris and do the Maori Haka' so my mother got us two bath towels and taught us 'Hera Mia, Hera Mia, Tatami, Tatami,' they were the only words that she knew and she taught us that and then showed us the Maori Haka dance. Dancing up and down and ending up with our tongues stuck out. She was born in New Zealand you see and I think it was an International Day. I don't know if we had make up

or not but we were a great success and we had to go round every classroom and perform.

Margaret: What about picnics - were there many organised school picnics?

**Coralie:** I didn't get to go to any. I didn't hear of any.

Margaret: Were they on though?

**Coralie:** I don't know.

Margaret: You wouldn't have an end of the year school picnic for the whole school?

**Coralie:** No. Didn't even have school parties at the end of the year. I can remember there were Easter Bunnies in about Grade 2 or 3. That's about the only thing.

Margaret: What about rooms decorated in a festive mood for Christmas?

**Coralie:** I think there was a little bit of that. The classrooms - some of them were better than others depending on the ability of the teacher.

Margaret: Was a lot of your work hung up around the room?

**Coralie:** No. None at all.

Margaret: What about swimming - was the school ever taken en masse to swim?

**Coralie:** No. I didn't learn to swim at all. We never ever went swimming. In Grade 6 there was a trip to Phillip Island. I didn't go although I wanted to go. It was during the Depression not many could afford it, but they had a lovely time.

Margaret: You said before you have violin lessons - that was nothing to do with the school? Your mother?

**Coralie:** No. I think Mum paid a shilling a lesson. That's how much we paid for the bread for the weekend.

Margaret: Did you have any extra tuition at school at all - dancing, drama - anything like that? Where they brought special people in?

**Coralie:** No.

Margaret: Did they have any of those kind of people around?

**Coralie:** There was one lady came - she came to teach us how to speak nicely. I used to love that! I used to love the chance of being able to dot my I's and cross my T's but I know the boys used to make fun of this lady. I think the girls liked her.

Margaret: Did you have to pay for that?

**Coralie:** No. I would imagine that she might have come once a year.

Margaret: We talked about how you went home for lunch - was that just at East Adelaide?

**Coralie:** Yes. When I was the only child left at school. (Of her siblings at school.)

Margaret: How long would you be away from school - how much would it cut into your play time?

Coralie: I always felt that by the time I got back everybody was involved in play and lunch time wasn't any play time for me. By the time I walked home, had my lunch, walked back - there might have been five minutes spare. As I got older I would probably get a basketball or something - but at the most I would have had ten minutes of play time.

Margaret: So with your own friends you would mainly play at recess time?

Coralie: Yes.

Margaret: Did you have afternoon recess?

Coralie: Yes. I had one really close girlfriend - I guess we just had something going between us and she was very loyal and I am sure she would have been much more accepted into a lot of the other groups but never ever did I feel ostracised. Probably the reason I wasn't ostracised was because I had Una and also both of us were top students. There were three of us. Then I saw this honour roll for the first time. Somehow I knew that to be the top was not going to be my advantage, with all my other problems. (laughs) But then, when I went into Grade 7 and saw this honour roll and there was Betty Lane, André Prime, and I thought A, B, C - Coralie Ravenscroft.... I just thought that would be nice. I had never really tried before.

I did so well that the headmaster called me in and thought I had been cheating. Because I got 100% for this 100% for that. I got 684 marks out of 700. And he thought I had been cheating. Then he asked me some of the things and I just said it all off and he said 'Well how did you do so well?' and I told him about the honour roll, that I wanted my name on it. He was staggered. I told him about Betty Lane, André Prime - you know A, B, C. Every night I would come home from school and whatever the teacher had given us that day, and homework, I'd learn. I'd sit down and learn it. That's how I did it.

Margaret: What did you wear to school?

Coralie: I think mainly we had a grey box-pleated tunic - but I don't think I had many of those either - unless they were hand-me-downs.

Margaret: You said your mother didn't sew.

Coralie: No. I think I just wore whatever was available. I can't remember wearing a tunic except at odd times when I think I might have had a tunic, then I'd wear it.

Margaret: You said you always had boots or shoes to wear.

Coralie: Shoes. Not boots. Sometimes the shoes had holes in them. We'd put cardboard in them. I never ever went without shoes.

Margaret: At East Adelaide when you mentioned that there was a section there that the children came from poor homes - did many of them come without footwear?

Coralie: Yes. But I don't think very often. I have a feeling that there might have been a welfare club or Mother's club - I just had this feeling that East Adelaide cared about its pupils and although I did see this family Sandercock's come once - I think they just might have moved into the area and turned up really grubby, I know they didn't have shoes because this was unusual but that was only the first day or two and then they had shoes.

Margaret: You mentioned last time about the shared lunch thing. Obviously there was a recognition of people attempting to help those who didn't have any.

Coralie: Three of the teachers I have mentioned were really caring and to me they were really warm and outgoing. Because of Miss Hollingsworth - I am sure that's why I became a History teacher. I just used to sit there with my mouth open, listening to every word. But she really cared! I know she cared about me because some of the things (pause) I can remember standing up and saying (pause) I would think that woman to make me still feel alright when I am saying some of these outrageous things and to make me feel it is alright....

Margaret: So you recognised all that when you were at school?

Coralie: Yes. In Grade 4. And then Miss Cullinan - I was her pet. This was the one in the wheelchair - Una and I. She thought we were wonderful and we thought she was wonderful and that was a really happy year. And then unfortunately after being her pet then we got Miss Henderson who smacked me on the back of the leg, so that wasn't such a good year. Although in her own way I think she was probably a very good teacher.

Margaret: Your ability was never seen as a challenge to cut you down to size?

Coralie: Never. We were never made to feel it was unusual. The only time I can remember any comment being made was when I was at St. Morris and I went into the class and a teacher marking the roll down saw Ravenscroft and the teacher said 'Are you Bonnie's sister?' and I said 'Yes'. She said, 'I hope you are as bright as your sister!' That's the only comment I ever heard.

Margaret: That there was some intellectual talent in the family?

Coralie: Yes.

Margaret: Getting back to uniforms and things - did you have to wear your hair any certain way?

Coralie: No.

Margaret: Did you get your hair cut or was it left long?

Coralie: Mine was cut straight across there, straight round the sides.

Margaret: Who would cut it?

Coralie: Generally I think by the hairdresser. Other than that - sometimes my father.

Margaret: Did you have a least-favourite lesson?

Coralie: Drawing. Yes! And writing after that - I couldn't keep the letters between the lines no matter how hard I tried. I was never a good writer, I'm still not a good writer. And drawing - I really used to love it - I think we had a special teacher - I don't think it was the class teacher. I can remember I was really drawing this set of gum leaves - I was drawing them exactly as it was with all the little bulges and dirty bits and wormy bits, you know it was really a scientific masterpiece and this teacher came along and took one look and said something to the equivalent of 'My God' and I burst into tears and said 'That's what it looks like!' and she said 'Yes but in art you don't draw it the way it looks. You make it look beautiful'. That was the last lesson I tried to do art. I'm not good at art.

Margaret: What other text books do you remember?

**Coralie:** We didn't have much in the way of text books.

**Margaret:** What about readers?

**Coralie:** We had readers. Everybody had the same readers and then we had school papers which we read.

**Margaret:** Did you used to listen to the Children's Hour from the Broadcasting school?

**Coralie:** We used to listen to the broadcast when we were getting ready for the choir, the Thousand Voices Choir.

**Margaret:** Did you take part?

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** More than once?

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** Where would that take place?

**Coralie:** Centennial Hall.

**Margaret:** What month of the year was it?

**Coralie:** I think November - near the end of the year.

**Margaret:** Did you have a special outfit for that?

**Coralie:** Yes. White dress.

**Margaret:** What would the boys wear?

**Coralie:** I think they had grey pants and white shirts but I am not sure.

**Margaret:** Would your parents go?

**Coralie:** Mine didn't. I don't know how I got there - I think somebody else might have taken me. That was a really wonderful occasion.

**Margaret:** What do you remember of it?

**Coralie:** Walking up the stairs. Left foot and then right up and then left foot and then the right up and the fact that there was so many and the conductor. People really did respond and want to do their best.

**Margaret:** What sort of songs did you sing?

**Coralie:** Very Empire (pause) and I think a bit of multiculturalism. But mainly they were English or British songs.

**Margaret:** With History, Geography and those sorts of things - how was the information presented to you if you didn't have a lot of text books.

**Coralie:** I can vividly remember Miss Hollingsworth in Grade 4 with History. We never ever saw a book, never had a picture on the wall, never had anything. She might have shown us a picture if she had one. But she just used to tell us about things. I don't know what the other kids did, I think they did the same as me, but I would sit there, mouth open and she would just



tell us the story of whatever it was - and at the end she'd ask if anyone had any questions and then she'd put something on the board and you'd write something in your book. But every single history lesson as far as I was concerned was a moving experience for me. She just made it live.

Margaret: So you remember the knowledge that was passed rather than the text that it was supposed to be in.

Coralie: I remember the knowledge and the feeling about it. The emotion. I can remember her telling us about Wolf and the Battle of Quebec or something and she wouldn't just say 'these soldiers climbing up the craggy cliffs etc.' She'd make us feel what it was like. How hard it was, and how dark and how cold it was. What they were suffering to do whatever it was they had to do.

Margaret: This was in Grade 4?

Coralie: Yes.

Margaret: What about literature and poetry?

Coralie: Yes. Yeah.

Margaret: Did you have to recite a lot of poetry?

Coralie: We'd recite poetry or read poetry. I can't remember having to learn poetry off by heart.

Margaret: What about singing songs?

Coralie: Yes. We had singing once a week I think. Singing once a week, sewing once a week, dancing - folk dancing once a week, spelling every morning, mental every morning, dictation once a day, the academic sort of subjects were always in the morning and the less academic ones in the afternoon.

Margaret: Seeing you were actually in a classroom with boys later on, what was their equivalent to your needlework?

Coralie: Woodwork.

Margaret: But in all others you would receive the same time for subjects?

Coralie: I would imagine so. Although I feel there might have been a great emphasis on sport for the boys.

Margaret: They had organised sports.

Coralie: Yes. We never had much in the way of equipment. I mean, we had the playground, but generally not much.

Margaret: What about when you were at school did you ever have a part-time job where you earned money?

Coralie: No.

Margaret: Your parents were always able to pay?

Coralie: Not really because when it came to grade 7 and I could have gone on to Norwood High they wouldn't let me go because they couldn't afford to pay for the fares and things so I had to do Grade 7 a second time.

Margaret: After being dux of the school?

Coralie: Yes.

Margaret: What was the logic in that? Economic?

Coralie: Mostly. But I didn't have a bike - I couldn't ride bikes and it was mainly the fares. There were two or three of us had to go back to school because our parents couldn't pay for high school - we just went back a second year and I think the teachers were disappointed that we'd come back but in many respects that second year was a very fulfilling year.

Margaret: In what sense?

Coralie: I am sure that was the year when we got more books to read and as a little group we were extended I guess within the classroom. We all went back to school because our parents wouldn't or couldn't afford for us to go to high school.

Margaret: At what age did you actually leave school?

Coralie: That was grade 7 and then my parents moved to Victoria. When they moved to Victoria I went to Prahran Tech - I went from Grade 7 in Adelaide and that was the year of the polio epidemic and then I got into Adelaide Tech, and then about mid way through that year they moved to Melbourne and so I went to Prahran Tech in Melbourne. I suppose I didn't like it much because it was quite a different sort of school. They had a big emphasis again on sewing, petticoats and that sort of thing! (laughs) And I started doing science for the first time, which I had never done before. The girls were nice, they immediately decided I was a hockey player and invited me to join the hockey team. I said I have never played hockey in my life, they thought I looked like a player. (laughs) The girls were really welcoming. Anyway I went home one day and my mother had found a job for me. I was about 13 and a half.

Margaret: The leaving age was still 14?

Coralie: Yes.

Margaret: How did she break the news about the job - what did she say?

Coralie: She said 'There's a job at the Chemists you've got to have a bike for it'. 'You can get a bike'. I think I was going to get 15 shillings a week, I was going to have to give her seven and six a week, pay two and six off my bike.

Margaret: She had it all worked out?

Coralie: Yes.

Margaret: What did you say?

Coralie: Yes. It was the first bike I ever had.

Margaret: Was that an incentive?

Coralie: Definitely. If I hadn't got the bike I wouldn't have taken it. But she'd got a job for me before that down near the Jam Factory at the dressmakers - I was only 13 then.

Margaret: And you disliked sewing so much?

**Coralie: But she had the job ready for me to start on the Monday.**

Margaret: That organised?

**Coralie: Yes. Yes. I was to start on the Monday.**

Margaret: How did you get out of that?

**Coralie: I am so proud of myself about that because I just refused to go. I just said 'I hate sewing, I am no good at it - no way is that what I want to do'. Her sister had been a tailoress and all during the Depression when everyone else was out of work, Myrtle had a job so I can understand it. But I am very very proud of myself that even though there was this job to go to that at thirteen I just said 'I am not going'.**

Margaret: So it was the bike?

**Coralie: Yes. Without the bike I don't think I would have gone.**

Margaret: Retracing for a moment. We talked a lot about the playing etc. Can you ever remember playing with boys then in the playground at school?

**Coralie: I can remember playing at East Adelaide in Grade 7 with a couple of boys and the play used to be - they had to wear caps, so Una and I would rush up and grab their cap and start throwing it back to each other so they would chase us. That was the main thing.**

Margaret: Would they ever hurt you?

**Coralie: No. We were interested in them and they were interested in us and this was a flirtatious thing. Then eventually this boy's mother invited us to afternoon tea - that was a real big deal. I don't think we could cope with anything after that. (laughter)**

Margaret: Perhaps she was a shrewd lady. (laughter)

Margaret: We talked about skipping - what about play with the ball - was that very important?

**Coralie: Yes. Games used to go in cycles. At one stage everybody had a tennis ball at school and we used to play - I think it was called 'Sixes' - for every number you had to do a different thing. You'd all be lined up against the brick wall, everybody would be doing these actions with the ball, and if you made a mistake you would have to go straight back to one again.**

Margaret: Would you clap your hands and catch the ball?

**Coralie: Yes. Turn around. Open your legs and throw the ball through and it used to get harder at every level.**

Margaret: Would you have your own tennis ball?

**Coralie: Yes. Things used to go in stages. At another stage and I can't remember at what school - at some stage we played marbles.**

Margaret: Girls too?

**Coralie: Yes. I was quite surprised the first time I played and somebody took my marble - I didn't realise it was his for keeps. I can still remember that.**

**'What are you taking my marbles for?' And finding out that was how you played the game.**

**Margaret:** Do you remember any of the versions of marbles?

**Coralie:** Yes. There was one that you had a circle and a whole lot of marbles in the middle of it and you'd shoot them and knock them out and whatever you shot you got. There was another where you followed each other. They were the main two.

**Margaret:** Who would you play marbles with?

**Coralie:** Always people within the class. You always played with children in your own class.

**Margaret:** So boys and girls would play together?

**Coralie:** This was probably when we had boys and girls in the class together. But boys were never significant. Even though you were in a class with boys there was a separation.

**Margaret:** An understood one you mean?

**Coralie:** Yes. More or less. Boys I think we found a bit frightening. Because they'd do things like pulling girls hair, plaits. Boys did nasty things to girls - that was the sort of general consensus of girls at school.

**Margaret:** So you were quite happy to avoid them?

**Coralie:** Yes. Mmm.

**Margaret:** Did they ever come and deliberately disrupt your game?

**Coralie:** They did disrupt girls' games - I can't remember if they disrupted my games. But they did disrupt.

I can't remember that they were really violent. Although now and again I think we did play 'keeping fox' sometimes and that would generally end in a brawl - you know a boy falling on top of a girl or something like that.

**Margaret:** What do you mean by 'keeping fox'?

**Coralie:** When you had one ball and two teams - there would be the boys against the girls. That's the way we used to play it. And it would have been alright if the boys had played by our rules, but once they started to play by their own rules, that would finish it.

**Margaret:** There were always teachers in the playground?

**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** Did they ever join in with you?

**Coralie:** Not that I can remember.

**Margaret:** What about things like Red Rover and those sorts of things?

**Coralie:** Yes. We played those more at Grade 4 and 5 and again boys and girls together. But again if a boy got the ball, you used to get the ball and brand somebody and everyone was frightened when a boy had the ball because they

could throw it so hard and it would hurt. So, although boys used to play that girls preferred to play on their own.

Margaret: So what about things like 'Ring a Ring a Rosie' - did you play that as a little?

Coralie: Yes. But they would mainly be organised games with the teacher. So instead of folk dancing, you'd generally have the teacher and the teacher would organise singing games especially 'I wrote a letter to my love' - that was definitely a class thing.

Margaret: So a lot of this play that kids used to play by themselves then was appropriated within the classroom in a formalised way. It wasn't something you did by yourself?

Coralie: There were two lots of things. The more organised play was generally teacher-initiated but the play we did ourselves were things like jumps and skipping at whichever level you wanted to play it or throwing the ball against the wall. Hopscotch was another one.

Margaret: How did you play it - rectangular one, circular one?

Coralie: Always rectangular. There would be three rings and then an oblong with a division down the middle and then another ring and another oblong and you'd hop the first three and then you'd put both feet out so it was either side of the line, hop again, both feet astride, parallel and back again. But then you'd have to throw your hopscotch rock into the first circle and then the second and so on.

Margaret: So it was circles and oblong?

Coralie: The way we played it we had three circles I think and then an oblong, another circle and another oblong and if you threw your stone here where you started from the first circle, hop hop hop, (astride) turn around hop, (astride) hop hop pick up your stone and go out. Then you'd go to the second circle.

Margaret: How did you delineate the circles and what with?

Coralie: You'd draw them in the dirt with your foot. Sometimes they would draw it with chalk on the footpath. But there were never proper ones painted.

Margaret: My generation - we used to take delight in telling fat and skinny jokes - that sort of thing - do you remember any kind of rhymes, taunts, insults in the playground?

Coralie: I think I probably did but I was too good and I wouldn't have been in it. I can remember 'Fat and Skinny went to war' and that sort of thing - I don't know whether they were taunts. There were taunts like 'Sticks and Stones' - and there were always these little gossipy arguments between groups of people.

Margaret: There was no sort of racist type?

Coralie: There was a German girl in our class - Mattiske I think her name was and I'd say most of the people weren't very nice to her. In fact, I'm quite sure they weren't.

Margaret: Remember any of the verbal...

Coralie: I think they used to call her German sausage or something like that. Again I used to feel sorry for her but I don't know that I was terribly nice to her either but I was never nasty to her. I used to feel sorry. But I didn't

have the guts to make myself unpopular by siding with her. I'd like to say I was! (laughter) But I felt it wasn't fair.

Margaret: Any Aboriginals in your school?

Coralie: No.

Margaret: You talked about marbles - how would you get your own marbles?

Coralie: I would imagine I would have got them from one of my brothers. I certainly wouldn't have had them bought for me.

Margaret: Did you have tops of any kind?

Coralie: Yes. I can remember a top. Again I think it was mainly an adult thing - I think my mother used to play with tops and I think at some stage she might have bought me a top. But it was her game more than my game.

Margaret: Were spinning tops in then?

Coralie: Yes. I can remember those. But this was one on a string - but I am sure my mother played with it more than I did. I can remember some of the best play I had - I think it was when we were going to Wellington Road School - one school holidays we must have been getting on mother's nerves and had nothing to do and she made me - I don't know about the other children - she made me these jam tin stilts. Two jam tins and a rope around them. I played with those stilts for days and days on end. Turned all the neighbours mad - because of the noise - but I remember that.

Another game I used to play when we lived at Payneham Road and because I was on my own, mainly I played school - the other game was making perfume out of the rose petals and the other was making mud pies. I would be nine or even ten when I am baking these mud pies and setting it in the sun and letting it get hard, I used to mix up the Kalsomine icing and decorate all these mud pies with icing - that used to keep me busy for days and days. I think my father thought I was going to be a cake decorator.

Margaret: And you got pleasure from that?

Coralie: Yes. We had a big mulberry tree and somebody must have given me some silkworms - that's right, somebody asked me if they could have some leaves for the silkworms so we must have done a trade. That was a fun thing too - feeding these silkworms and getting the cocoon.

Margaret: By yourself?

Coralie: Yes. I used to have a place underneath the Mulberry tree and that's where I used to do all my mud pie cooking etc. looking after my silkworms.

Margaret: That was your special place?

Coralie: Yes. And the backroom where I played school. Actually I had a very happy childhood in some ways. Isolated but happy. When my father was on shiftwork I wasn't allowed to play inside. I had a swing in the backyard.

Margaret: What was it made out of?

Coralie: Just a piece of rope with a board across. I had lots of trees to climb.

Margaret: What about knucklebones?

**Coralie:** Yes. We had those at some stage. I never took to knucklebones, I don't think I could do it properly and I don't think I even had them, I think my sister played knucklebones.

(End tape 2)

**Mrs. Green - Interview II (con't) Tape III**

**Coralie:** All of these games went in cycles.

**Margaret:** What do you mean by cycles? Do you mean seasons?

**Coralie:** All of a sudden you'd come and one day everybody would be playing statues and then perhaps the whole of that term would be statues and then the next time you'd come back to school somebody might have brought a ball and you'd be playing sixes. There was no organisation - it just happened. Same with yo-yos.

**Margaret:** So yo-yos were in?

**Coralie:** Yes. Yo-yo's were in.

**Margaret:** You had your own?

**Coralie:** No. I always had OP - other people's. I never had a yo-yo. (laughter)

**Margaret:** You can't ever remember some powerful female saying....

**Coralie:** No. It would happen. But statues was a real good game.

**Margaret:** How did you play it?

**Coralie:** It might have happened that there might have been parties and statues were played, I don't know - but as far as I was concerned all of a sudden everyone was playing statues and so you'd ask to join in. Then every lunch or every recess let's play statues. The others might have been playing something else, I don't know.

**Margaret:** Was it a whole class activity that everybody played or small groups?

**Coralie:** Small groups I think. I would feel that there were probably three groups in our class. I think there were the girls who were probably much wiser than us would sit and talk - because there was quite a bit of dirty talk used to go on, and then there were the children, I suppose more the middle class sort and somehow I used to be included in their group. And then there were the others - I don't know what they would play. Sometimes we'd join together. There wouldn't be really a war. You somehow knew which group to go and ask to join in.

**Margaret:** In 'Statues' - would you mainly freeze into a physical shape or would you have to portray some particular person?

**Coralie:** I never portrayed any particular person. What happens is you hold somebody's hand in the middle and they swing you around three times and let you go and then the idea is the way you are going naturally is the way you are supposed to freeze.

**Margaret:** That's different from how that was handed down to me. Someone would say 'one, two, three' or whatever and then they would turn around and you would have to stop.

**Coralie:** We definitely used to stand in the middle and be swung around three times and as you let go you would sort of stay in that position and then the person who was doing it would go to another person and swing them around three times. So with your little group there might have been half a dozen.

**Margaret:** So everyone would have a turn.



**Coralie:** Yes.

**Margaret:** How would you choose who was the next one to be the leader?

**Coralie:** That's a matter of how you'd start. Everyone of these games you'd start off by deciding who was going to be 'It'. And then you'd have all these one potato, two potato - so you'd go through all of that first and we'd generally do the potato ones because everyone liked that and it took longer.

**Margaret:** How did you finish it off because I've heard different versions of this.

**Coralie:** 'One potato, two potato, three potato four, five potato, six potato, seven potato more' and on 'more' you'd put your hand behind your back and then you go through it again - and that could take five minutes or more to get everybody through. So the one who is left in is 'It'.

**Margaret:** I can remember we used to have one called 'Ink, Pink, Pen and Ink'. (laughter)

**Coralie:** Yes. And 'Round and Round the Mulberry Bush' was another one.

**Margaret:** So that was all to decide who was 'It'.

**Coralie:** Yes, that was as much part of the play as the play itself. And then after you'd decided who was going to be in the middle then after they were statues they would come and tickle you under the chin and if you moved then you weren't a statue so you were out. I don't know if it was when you giggled you had to go 'It' or whether the best statue was 'It'. And of course the best statue was generally the best friend of the person who was 'It'. (laughter)

**Margaret:** What about 'What's the Time Mr. Wolf?'

**Coralie:** Yes. That game to me didn't seem to last as long as some of the others, such as 'Queenie, whose got the ball?' There was 'Grandmother's Steps'.

**Margaret:** What was that?

**Coralie:** You had one at the end and they'd turn round, to try and catch you moving. The runner would tap you on the back having taken giant steps without you seeing them move.

**Margaret:** Would you get to play rounders and cricket and those sort of things?

**Coralie:** We played rounders on family picnics.

**Coralie:** Those would be the sort of games that we as a family would play on a picnic. Rounders was always a family picnic game after you'd had your lunch. Generally while the parents were having a rest. Generally, my father would play. Generally my mother wouldn't join in. French cricket too but rounder was more popular.

**Margaret:** Did you ever fly a kite?

**Coralie:** My mother made us a kite once. Only a one-off sort of activity for us.

**Margaret:** You weren't into regular kite flying?

**Coralie:** No. The fun with the flying kite was more the making of it than the flying for us. Because there was a lot of laughter and hilarity because this

wonderful kite that mother had made wouldn't fly and there was all the trouble trying to work out about the tail and getting things to make the tail longer - I don't know if it ever did fly - I think it probably did but the activity was the making of it and the getting it to fly more than flying it.

Margaret: How did she make it?

**Coralie:** Brown paper. She'd make her own paste.

Margaret: What about stilts - other girls would play with stilts?

**Coralie:** No. That was only my mother's activity for the school holidays.

Margaret: What about billy carts and those sorts of things - did the boys in your family have go-carts or billy carts?

**Coralie:** My younger brother did but I don't think the older ones did.

Margaret: What about horseshoes? Quoits?

**Coralie:** I think I had Quoits at one stage. We used to play down the side path and do this 'hockey one, hockey two' with the broomstick and with a ball, in the drive.

Margaret: This was with your brothers and sister?

**Coralie:** Yes.

Margaret: We talked before about being too old for things - were you ever considered to be too young to play certain games?

**Coralie:** Quite often. I always had the feeling that I was always too young for everything unless they were missing one. (laughter)

Margaret: This was at home?

**Coralie:** Yes. Because there were three of them and they might have had a friend in or something and I was always too young unless they needed someone to make up the numbers.

Margaret: So it wasn't a matter of skill but availability?

**Coralie:** Yes.

Margaret: Getting back to the play ground - we used to play things like 'Riddley-riddley ree'.

**Coralie:** Yes. I can't remember much about them. I think we'd turn around trying to guess who'd done it.

Margaret: Did you ever play a game in the playground called 'Scissors, Stone and Paper'?

**Coralie:** No. I don't remember that one.

Margaret: We talked about poetry before - what I didn't ask you before was can you remember any of the stories or nursery rhymes or whatever that teachers would read to you, fairy stories - that had a particular impact?

**Coralie:** A whole lot of them may have had an impact on me - 'Hiawatha' did. I don't know why but I can remember quite a lot of tragic stories - Kipling's

poems I liked. I can't remember any of the classics that were ever read to us.

Margaret: No Australian ones - Seven Little Australians?

Coralie: No. Actually I don't think it was until I did matric as an adult that I was aware of so much Australian literature. Another thing that was interesting compared today - our library was a shelf in the teacher's cupboard and generally the books were whatever the teacher had been able to scrounge - I am sure there was no money allocated for books. And there wouldn't have been a book for every child in the class. I think the teacher would mainly dole out those books too. I think one of the books was Anne of Green Gables but most of the books they gave were not all that inspiring.

Margaret: What about toys or puzzles or board games - were they available at school for you?

Coralie: No.

Margaret: You said before you might have taken a doll to school when you were little, you never had toys on deck to bring to school other than 'Show and Tell'?

Coralie: No. And it wasn't the sort of thing that was encouraged.

Margaret: What about autographs - did you have an autograph book?

Coralie: I didn't have one. My autograph was in all the others! (laughter)

Margaret: Why didn't you have an autograph book?

Coralie: I don't think I ever asked for one. When you are poor you just get the message so early that you don't ask for what you want if it can't be afforded. I didn't really feel deprived - sounds silly doesn't it. But I didn't. It wasn't something I envied the others of. I liked giving others my autograph but I never really aspired to have one myself.

Margaret: Was it just writing your name?

Coralie: No. All sorts of messages. 'By hook or by crook I'll be first in this book or last in this book'. Something like that. I can't even remember what my favourite one was.

Margaret: This business of playing by yourself, that basically was because of your father's shiftwork?

Coralie: And because my parents were very religious I think. I don't think it was so much that they were selective but they didn't want me contaminated. Only a couple of times can I remember going to play - once I remember going to play doctors and nurses - Now, I never went there to play again! (laughter)

Margaret: Did you tell your mother?

Coralie: I must have. I wasn't enjoying the game anyway. I had never come across this playing doctors and nurses and looking at your pants and all of this. (laughter) And I think this was the sort of thing that probably happened and my mother wished to avoid.

Margaret: At school you said that the boys had organised sport - were you organised into team games or team sport activities?

**Coralie:** I can remember at East Adelaide school, when they got its first netball court for girls. I think I was in Grade 5 or 6 and one of the teachers was talking about netball and the girls playing - there was nowhere for them to play and we were all asked to ask around where there were any tennis courts and near me there were people who had a tennis court. So, I can remember going into these people and saying the school needs a place to play netball and telling them. I think a lot of people were trying to find a court and eventually there was a block of land across the road from the school, I don't know whether they bought it or hired it for our netball court. That was the first time. They didn't play netball until that court was available.

**Margaret:** What was it made out of?

**Coralie:** I can't remember. But when you think about it there was a whole lot of yard in the boys' yard - there was a large amount of space there. If I think back it would have been possible for half of that boys' yard to be made into a netball court. Whereas in the girls' yard there would not have been the room.

**Margaret:** So they would have provided the netballs?

**Coralie:** Yes. And the goalposts. I think we went somewhere else first. I think we went down towards Fourth Avenue to some courts first. I can remember the first time East Adelaide ever played netball. The teacher got all the girls who wanted to come and we all went there trying out for teams. I was very little but I was a very good goaler and eventually I got a place in the team because I could shoot goals.

**Margaret:** Did you have a special uniform?

**Coralie:** I wouldn't have worn a special uniform. I don't even know that we went and played away - just played there.

**Margaret:** What about the boys - did they have a football team?

**Coralie:** I am not sure if they did. They could have. I'm not sure.

**Margaret:** What about drill exercises?

**Coralie:** Every Friday - the first two lessons would be our Friday tests. Friday were really fun days - well they were for me. Friday tests as soon as you got in until the morning recess time, then we used to go into the boys yard - the whole school - and we'd have all this marching around to music, lovely music - a record, probably the same record every week. But I have a feeling that perhaps the teachers might have been back marking the tests. We would be all marching along and whichever class was the best, they used to win and the prize for winning was to have a photo of the King hanging up in their room. That was the prize. Everyone used to try really hard and they used to get really scotty with anyone who was out of step or didn't do it properly.

We really tried hard in my class - especially to beat the boys - it was very much a male/female thing - if we saw the boys doing things really well, we'd all try that much harder, (laughter) get our arms up straight. Then you'd go back after that and the teacher would generally have marked all the tests and she'd give out the marks. There we re-arranged the seating from the Friday tests - it used to be out of 50 and she'd say 'Fifty' and whoever got 50 would get in the best seat - the top back left hand corner. The top back facing the teacher. So, fifty would be there then forty nine, forty eight, and forty seven and so on. I think there was about eight along the back row - I never

ever got out of the back row. And then you'd come right down according to the marks so the worst marks were down the front. Nobody cared, nobody minded.

Margaret: You were a top student, how do you know about that?

Coralie: I don't know - none of them cried - they seemed to just expect it. If they moved one seat, one seat forward or one seat back I don't think there was any trauma about it.

Margaret: That would happen after every Friday test?

Coralie: Yes. Mmm.

Margaret: In all classes?

Coralie: I don't know but this is what happened in our class. We used to look forward to it. Actually we sometimes, if we wanted to sit next to our friend we'd make sure we got the same marks. (laughter)

Margaret: Without cheating?

Coralie: You'd do a bit of cheating. You'd sort of whisper the answer to such and such. You wouldn't cheat but you'd compare. And if she had different marks to you. You'd go back and find out. You wouldn't cheat! (laughter) After you'd finished you'd have enough time to compare your answers. Or else you'd have them on a piece of paper and you'd pass them over to your friend. With arithmetic you could always have the same results. And if your spelling was pretty good.

Margaret: What about physical culture - did you have to go through that?

Coralie: Yes. I am sure our teachers didn't like doing physical culture very much because I can remember doing a few bits and pieces - jumping up and down and clapping your hands - but in the later years I am sure it was nearly all folk dancing.

What I really liked was the folk dancing. We had a few special things happen because there was in 1934, I think, the Duke and Duchess of York came out, we did wonderful things on the Adelaide Oval.

Margaret: What did you do?

Coralie: I think that one was the one where I was a Poppy - I think we did all these flowers of the Empire - no, it must have been English flowers - some were roses, some poppies, snowdrops and things. Anyway we had yellow cheesecloth dresses.

Margaret: Who made all those?

Coralie: The mothers' club had made mine, I don't know who made the others.

Margaret: There was a mothers' club.

Coralie: Yes. I think the mothers that could do and the mothers that couldn't or wouldn't then others made them. We had these great hats made of paper I think I was a poppy that time. That was on Adelaide Oval. That was a bit of forerunner for the Centenary in 1936. In 1936 I must have been in grade 5 and we were autumn leaves representing Canada. That must have been really something!

Margaret: Did all schools take part?

Coralie: A lot of schools. It was very hot. That was also Adelaide Oval. What we did - as autumn leaves we come in all green and we all had to dance round and all I can remember is this great maple leaf and it must have been green and we all had to lie flat on the ground and while we were flat on the ground all these little snowflakes used to dance all around and while they were dancing around and dropping the snow on us we were lying on the ground turning each other's leaf over from green to orange or red or whatever. We were really well organised, everybody knew who had to turn everybody else's leaf over and then when the snow went away up we got and we were all multi-coloured autumn leaves. It was quite stunning. Those two experiences were two of the most pleasant experiences I ever had in my life. They were really nice.

Margaret: To be part of such a huge spectacle?

Coralie: Yes.

Margaret: You weren't at school when war broke out?

Coralie: No. I was 15 then. In 1939. I'd been working!

Margaret: Coming over from there to time spent at home - you made mud pies and all those sorts of things - would you fantasise about things like dressing up as a bride? Those sorts of things?

Coralie: No. I was very much a realist. And I have done a bit of writing and I am very much a realist with that. Most of my play was playing a teacher in school and I used to just repeat whatever happened at school - very much reality.

Margaret: No charades playing in the house?

Coralie: No. I used to have fantasies when I watched the fire, I used to see all sorts of pictures in the fire. Stories in the fire too.

Margaret: Wouldn't look at the clouds and do the same thing?

Coralie: No. Which can get very frightening - especially Alice in Wonderland - it was a book that frightened me very much. I was really scared when I was reading Alice in Wonderland. Especially the dropping down the hole. That really terrified me.

Margaret: In what sense - did you think it would happen to you?

Coralie: Just I was frightened - I don't know whether I thought it would happen to me or what. The more I thought of it the more scared I got. The only thing that I can think of that was similar was when I was pregnant, I wasn't sure what was going to happen about childbirth. The same sort of feeling.

Margaret: How did you get the book?

Coralie: I think the teacher must have given it to me.

Margaret: So when you went to school and came home, did you stop off anywhere on the way and go and play?

**Coralie:** No. Always straight home. At some stage there was a girl moved into a house near us - I was allowed to play with her quite freely and did and that was as near to normal as any of my play ever was. But she went to a private school in Harrow Road. Her family had a store in the market. We played after school.

**Margaret:** So, other than her there wasn't as a rule any going to play in other people's homes...?

**Coralie:** My best friend - Una - I never ever went to her house. Even though we were best friends at school.

**Margaret:** So, games other than card games at home which were part of your family life.....

**Coralie:** Card games - apart from that I don't think anything.

**Margaret:** Tea parties or things like that?

**Coralie:** No. There was sort of jokes but mainly it would be my father, like Christmas pudding and everyone finding threepenny pieces he would always find either a note or 20 cents or something.....

**Margaret:** So you weren't told to stop playing and come to the table for your meal?

**Coralie:** We had regular meal times. It was formal.

**Margaret:** Did you bring your games to the table?

**Coralie:** No. You'd probably stay at the table afterwards and bring toys there.

**Margaret:** What's your earliest memory of a toy?

**Coralie:** Oh, I know what that was. That was a little wicker pram and I hated it because I didn't want a little wicker pram I wanted a proper doll's pram. I would've preferred not to have any pram at all. (laughter) I was really disappointed.

**Margaret:** Who gave it to you?

**Coralie:** Father Christmas I suppose.

**Margaret:** What were your favourite play things - objects?

**Coralie:** The chalk and the blackboard, the swing I used to like.

**Margaret:** Were your inside toys always kept in your 'school' room?

**Coralie:** Yes. We each had a doll but even then I feel I missed out because my sister's doll had the better name. Her's was Betty and I wanted to have mine called Betty! Mine was called Jane!

**Margaret:** What were the dolls like?

**Coralie:** They were pretty similar. And I suppose its just that second sister thing - whatever your big sister has you want to.

**Margaret:** Who gave you the doll?

**Coralie:** I suppose that was Father Christmas as well.

Margaret: So most of your toys were either Christmas presents or birthday presents?

**Coralie: Yes. All of them.**

Margaret: ...Did you have many toys?

**Coralie: No. Pram, doll and a skipping rope. I had the book that I got at St. Morris when I won the prize - that was about it I think.**

Margaret: What about comics - were you allowed to read comics?

**Coralie: I wanted to read comics but I wasn't into that scene because I didn't have any to swap. I never bought a comic.**

Margaret: Were you aware of any children's newspapers around or sections for children?

**Coralie: No. I knew there were comics. And in the Christian papers there was a child's bit.**

Margaret: What kind of reading of books did you actually do at home?

**Coralie: I wouldn't have done much.**

Margaret: I remember you said you never knew there was a library - that kind of activity was school activity?

**Coralie: Yes.**

Margaret: What about hobbies then - did you collect marbles, labels, stamps?

**Coralie: No. None of those things.**

Margaret: Not postcards?

**Coralie: No. Nor did I have penfriends. No, No.**

Margaret: Pressing flowers?

**Coralie: I didn't used to press them, I used to collect them while they were fresh and boil them all up. (laughter)**

Margaret: So you can't think of any particular hobbies you had?

**Coralie: No.**

Margaret: What about sewing at home? Do needlework of some kind?

**Coralie: I suppose I made clothes for my doll.**

Margaret: By hand?

**Coralie: Yes.**

Margaret: Did your mother have a sewing machine?

**Coralie: She did at one stage. My mother never did sewing much.**

Margaret: So you never put any of your handywork in exhibitions?

**Coralie: No.**



Margaret: What about gardening and so. Did you have a little plot to grow flowers?

**Coralie:** No. I used to help my father in the vegetable patch - I don't know if this was to get me out of the house because I might have been a nuisance. I think sometimes I was. He used to do a lot of teaching in the garden and he used to like growing things. Vegetables and that. I would imagine that I would have spent more time with my father than my mother.

Margaret: When you came home from school would you have to change your clothes.

**Coralie:** It would depend. If I had something good on then I would but most times I didn't.

Margaret: You didn't have certain clothes for playing in?

**Coralie:** No.

Margaret: Last time we talked about a typical weekend. To recap ... Saturdays and Sundays what would you do?

**Coralie:** It would depend - at different times different things. If it was when I was a bit older and my brothers were playing football then we'd all go off and watch their game. This would be after they were about fifteen. I would have been about eight. That would be Saturdays. From that age on if they were playing football we'd follow them.

Margaret: Would you go for walks together?

**Coralie:** No. Some Saturdays - I used to go down to my violin lessons because I can remember passing and the tap dancing was on and I used to have my shilling in my little hot hand and many was the temptation - it was a shilling to go to the tap dancing class.

Margaret: What about holidays - did the family ever go on holidays?

**Coralie:** No. But my mother took my sister and myself and my new baby brother to Melbourne once when he was born. When I was about ten but that was the only time I can remember.

Margaret: How did you go?

**Coralie:** By train I think.

Margaret: Do you remember much of the holiday?

**Coralie:** No. I can remember my grandmother - I was very happy to meet her. I can remember my sister getting into grandma's wardrobe and she broke the wardrobe. She fell through the bottom of grandma's wardrobe.

Margaret: Because your parents worked mainly outside the Anglican Church organisation - you weren't exposed to a lot of church fund-raising, socialising - that sort of thing. Now your father later became interested in racing you said, so interests broadened. You said you didn't swim - but did you go to the beach at all?

**Coralie:** Sometimes we did. I nearly drowned at Glenelg.

Margaret: Tell me about that.

**Coralie:** Well, there were four bits of wood around and a thing going up like a tower and apparently, I know now that means there is a deep hole there, but I just thought it was something to climb up and play on - I was out of my

depth and I couldn't swim. And I kept thinking 'This is the end', and when I was fished out I was told 'That's not for playing on because there is a deep hole'.

Margaret: How old were you?

Coralie: I think it was after my brother was born - nine or ten.

Margaret: Did you have special bathers?

Coralie: Yes. But I think it was probably a hand-me-down from my sister.

Margaret: How would you get down to the beach?

Coralie: Sometimes we had a car. To go to Semaphore we'd go on the train. It would be a big outing going to Semaphore. I have a feeling we nearly went somewhere every weekend. If not every weekend at least once a month. It was something we did fairly frequently.

Margaret: When you went to the beach would you have your own bucket and spade?

Coralie: Sometimes I did but I can't remember.

Margaret: Did you say last time that you had been to a circus?

Coralie: No. Never.

Margaret: Other than your brothers' football you didn't go and watch the other football - the league football? Cricket?

Coralie: No.

Margaret: Did you ever go to a fancy dress ball - ever involved in a children's fancy dress?

Coralie: Yes. Once in Grade 7 we had a Fancy Dress Ball at school. And again I don't know who took me, perhaps one of my brother's might have taken me and dropped me off. And some other parent might have been organised to take me home - I don't know. But I know I was there, I won the prize. My mum was very good with things like this. Even though she wouldn't come - she'd gone to Rosella and got me a Rosella outfit to wear, did me up in a Rosella outfit.

I won the prize. I don't know whether I had eaten the chocolates that was the prize or not but I know we were in doing some singing for the school and I am in the front row, its obvious I am going to be sick (laughter) and the teacher is telling me to get off and eventually I get the message and go off and then the first aid people come and bring me around with smelling salts, I think it was just excitement. I'd won the first prize! I know the first aid people were asking about my parents and I knew for certain they weren't there. I don't know how I got home.

Margaret: Were there places that your brothers and sisters were allowed to go that you weren't?

Coralie: Brothers were allowed to go to the pictures. I wanted to go to the pictures. It was only sixpence. But I couldn't go.

Margaret: I know you said you felt boys were there largely to be ignored, did you feel that there was a strong difference about the way boys played to girls played?

**Coralie:** Its a bit hard because I had two brothers at home and you just knew that their life was different from yours. You didn't really have to know it at school.

My brothers by that time had motor bikes and they had a lot more freedom than me or my sister had. It was just a fact of life.

And it wasn't anything ever questioned. It was just the way it was.

**Margaret:** I want to look at you as a parent now and the child rearing thing. I know that after ten months life was very difficult for you but when Sue was born how did you expect to be as a mother? What expectations did you have of yourself? Did you model yourself on someone?

**Coralie:** I was twenty nine when I got married and I was thirty four when I had Sue. I desperately wanted a child, I had a lot of trouble conceiving so she was very much a wanted child. I think I had no doubt or hesitation in my mind that I would be a good mother. I was just very confident that I would know all about it. I was very scared when I actually had this small human being that I was responsible for. More a physical scaredness of handling her than anything else.

**Margaret:** With the bond or quasi-bond with your mother - did you ever consciously set out to do things differently from her?

**Coralie:** For sure. I felt that my mother towards me was a very poor mother. I felt unwanted I guess would be the main thing right through. I was just there - I didn't feel cherished. I didn't feel other than that she had to look after me. (laugh) But I knew what good mothering was.

**Margaret:** What was good mothering?

**Coralie:** I think good mothering to me is letting a child know that they are wanted, that they are cared for and that you really care and share in their upbringing. And also letting the person be a person in their own right but also seeing their potential and encouraging that to develop.

**Margaret:** Was Sue born at home or in hospital?

**Coralie:** Hospital.

**Margaret:** What kind of interaction did you have with your mother when you were bringing up Sue?

**Coralie:** It's strange, Sue had a really close bond to her grandmother. And she knows that my bond wasn't very good and yet she seems to be able to accept that but still respects her as a grandmother.

**Margaret:** Did she spend a lot of time with Sue?

**Coralie:** No. Not really. But the time she did spend seems to have made an impression on Sue. I think Sue would talk very highly of her grandmother whereas I would talk and think there were lots of mistakes she made and that she was a very selfish woman.

**Margaret:** How often would you see her?

**Coralie:** In Sue's early life - fairly often. I'd say at least twice a month.

**Margaret:** What about your father?

**Coralie:** He died before I was married. He died just after I got my matriculation results - I was so pleased that he lived to see that.

**Margaret:** You'd come out of the Air Force?

**Coralie:** Yes. Gone to the University to do a one year course without matriculation and worked for the YWCA. Then while I was at the YWCA I did matriculation.

**Margaret:** What about your mother-in-law or father-in-law - were they on the scene and involved with Sue?

**Coralie:** Yes. Well you see ten months after she was born, I suppose really even while I was pregnant I had doubts about the marriage. I wasn't being treated very well. They didn't have a great deal - mostly because I wasn't sure what was going to happen.

**Margaret:** Obviously it's rather pointless, in one sense, asking questions about your husband's involvement - after he left was there any contact with Sue?

**Coralie:** Yes. Even when he was there though. (pause) I'd sort of say 'Would you go and have a look at how the baby is?' - and I'd go in about a quarter of an hour afterwards and even though he had been in the baby was all uncovered. This sort of thing happened many times. He was a university lecturer but in some sense he just didn't have a clue. He really didn't have a clue.

**Margaret:** Do you think it was a deliberate attempt not to form a bond or he just didn't have...?

**Coralie:** I think he just didn't have a clue. Emotionally he hasn't been able to bond with any people, even now - even with his second family, the bonding just isn't there. I think he is frightened of emotional attachment.

**Margaret:** Obviously the marriage finished but did you have some kind of expectations that he would have some kind of strong fatherhood role with Sue after the marriage breakdown?

**Coralie:** No. I think I made those decisions. (pause) I think I just felt he hadn't a great deal to give. (pause) I thought he wasn't mature, I felt he was still a child himself. In fact on one occasion when Sue was about three, I don't know what contact we were having with each other or over what, but I sort of said 'This child is three - she is more emotionally mature than you are'!

**Margaret:** So all decisions you were prepared to shoulder yourself or you felt you had to anyway?

**Coralie:** I felt I was more capable. Looking back, I don't think I would have changed much. I think I feel it would have been nice for Sue to have had a relationship with her father but I had to do things like see my solicitor and say 'Will you for goodness sake get his solicitor to tell him to take Sue to the Zoo or somewhere' - I had to make suggestions to make the access acceptable - she just didn't want to go - she would cry and cry. She's got a working relationship with him now. There's no love there. She went over and spent a weekend with him, perhaps in the last five years, or when she was about twenty five and I sort of said I think you need to go for your own sake as much as for his sake. She went by train and I met her at the station and she came back and she put her arms around me and she said 'Mum I am so pleased that we didn't grow up living with him'.

She said he has got no relationship with his other two children, he beats the second wife. She said 'You did the right thing'. She said that several times. I left with £10 and he pulled every dirty trick in the book.

Margaret: Given that what did you decide as being important for Sue?

Coralie: I think I wanted stability and I think I made sure she got that. Here I was, she was ten months of age, I took him back when she was three, because he said it was going to work and then I moved out of the house and took her with me. When she was about seven and a half he had access. And from then on I did tend to put her first.

I think perhaps to too great a degree, on looking back now, but at the time I thought it was important. I didn't have much of a social life myself until we moved over here in 1966 when Sue was eight. When I came over here, my brother was at Henley Beach, I felt I could leave her safely with them and I started to have a bit of a social life then. And that's when I met my second husband. But stability was the main thing - that she wasn't going to be pushed from pillar to post. Or with both of us.

She had to go to a child-minding place while I worked but apart from that I did it all.

Margaret: It was fairly different to your own upbringing then. How do you feel about the difference from her experience to your experience?

Coralie: Because I was a social worker I think I knew the problems and I knew that those first few years were very vital to give her a sense of stability. And actually she was very stable, very secure, a child that was a joy and looked to have no problems at all until she reached adolescence. Then I realised there was a lot of insecurity and I don't think her adolescence has been easy, in fact I think it has been a fairly long adolescence. I feel really she's only matured since she turned twenty five. I think her adolescence was delayed. And when she was fourteen my second husband died and she had made a lovely relationship with him which was a joy to see - she really loved and cared for him.

(End Side 1)

**Mrs. Green Interview II (con't) Tape III - Side B**

**Coralie:** We also had a new house. I had been very sick - I had arthritis and a virus from when Sue was six I think - until even when I came over here I was still very sick. I had that arthritis that was very, very nasty.

**Margaret:** Were you still teaching then?

**Coralie:** I was off work from February to November and then even when I went back it used to affect me. If I got over-tired this would come back. If I looked after myself I would probably be alright.

**Margaret:** Before you re-married who did you have to help support you and Sue?

**Coralie:** I had my brother and sister in Melbourne who were very good, particularly when I was sick, they had me down to live in their house and Sue went to school with their little girl. They were very supportive at that time. I wasn't getting better in Melbourne and the climate wasn't very good and the doctor said all of these things together (pause) and the fact that he was living about a mile away from where I was living and I just couldn't cope with it. And also she didn't want to go and see him on the access thing. So, I thought the best thing for everyone was to come away. Because I was ill I had a good excuse to get away from the climate, so that's what we did.

**Margaret:** So in that potentially very small restricted social environment that you were living in did the two of you just have each other or would Sue have...?

**Coralie:** I had really good friends that I met through kindergarten with her. We were very close friends with Premier Cain and his wife (ex Victorian Premier) they were really nice. Mrs. Cain used to pick Sue up and I used to go and get her and have her child around. And another woman from the University was just down the road so she had really two good friends and I had a little bit of support from them. Plus my brother and his wife. And at school - I made good friends at school.

**Margaret:** So you put yourself out to get involved in those sorts of things?

**Coralie:** Yes. Basically I knew I had to rely on myself and I mostly did.

**Margaret:** At this early stage she wasn't a discipline problem?

**Coralie:** She was never a discipline problem. Never.

**Margaret:** She was happy at school?

**Coralie:** Yes. Yes. Yes.

**Margaret:** She made friends at school to play with?

**Coralie:** Yes. Yes.

**Margaret:** So there was no feeling of keeping her away from other children like your mother did?

**Coralie:** No. It was very much 50/50 but I was just as happy for her to go down and play at a friend's place or my place. I think she just had a very normal upbringing.

**Margaret:** When she was little do you remember what sort of toys she had. Was there an emphasis on giving her tangible things?

**Coralie:** I guess there's one thing that she got that she has never ever played with, that's a proper doll's pram. (laughter) I gave it to her when she was too young. When she was about four. I think of that and I giggle. She had this great wicker pram with a revolving top. (Much laughter) The other thing I gave her that wasn't a great success too, giving it for myself, was a chemistry set. (laughter)

**Margaret:** She hadn't asked for it?

**Coralie:** No. But I know with my making of perfume and things that I would have liked that. But we can laugh about it. The same when I wanted her to be a doctor - she'd say 'You're the one that wanted to be the doctor!' We've got a good relationship. We can laugh about that.

**Margaret:** Did she have a lot of toys?

**Coralie:** No. I did things like going to the second-hand shop, I found two little kindergarten chairs - about \$5.00 or something and then I went around all the shops and found an old table that I could paint to match. I went to great lengths to see that she didn't feel deprived. And probably I over-indulged her with the doll's pram and things of that kind. She would say she had a very happy childhood. She would say that until she got to the adolescent years and we started having conflict, power struggles, that I was the ideal mum according to her. It was only in adolescence that our values started to be questioned.

We never ever had any conflict to the extent that we weren't speaking or we were so angry with each other that we couldn't communicate. She did as much of bringing me up in adolescence as I did of bringing her up.

**Margaret:** Was Sue a girl who played by herself?

**Coralie:** Yes. Definitely. In the same way as I used to play and make my perfumes, she would sit by the television and do all sorts of survey sorts of things. She would spend hours writing things down and noting things! I wouldn't have a clue, but she would write for hours and hours and hours. When we first got married there were two step brothers and she used to keep a diary - she used to go belting off every now and then (pause) and as she got older I said 'Whatever were you doing' ... she said 'I used to write down who was crying and how many times everyone cried.' She used to keep all these sorts of social statistics from the television or from what was happening around her.

**Margaret:** What other sorts of games did she play?

**Coralie:** She and Anna used to play a lot of dressing up and having concerts. I think her ambition would have been to be a singer. To be an entertainer. They used to put on these concerts. Even when we came over here she used to put on these concerts - get all the kids around. They organised these concerts.

I can remember once - I did a couple of things that really hurt her I am sure - I can remember once, I felt like crawling under the table. She came tearing up to me with a whole bunch of soursobs and instead of accepting the gift as it was, and telling her they were lovely, I sort of told her they were weeds. I felt like crawling under the table when I saw how disappointed she was.

The other time I saw her writing up all these things, she had gone and put them in all the neighbours' letterboxes and she had a concert teed up with all the kids of neighbourhood and she was telling the neighbours to come and it

was going to be 5 cents in aid of Mrs. Johnson's birthday (Coralie). That was a lovely thought but I just had to say she couldn't do it that way. It was a nice thought but please would she go and get all the letters back and give the money back. (laughter)

Margaret: Did you spend time playing with her?

Coralie: I was teaching ever since she was two and a half. She would say I would be home here until I got in the car, by the time I got in the car I was a teacher, preparing my first lesson and thinking about and I was a teacher until I got in the car again to come home. As I got in the car I'd work out what we were going to have for tea, what to pick up at the shop and do all of that. Then I'd come home and from then on until tea time - that time was spent with Sue. Either we'd talk about her day or things but she always felt that that time was quality time. Then she'd go and do her homework and I'd get tea. We very much shared that time. She'd always go to bed about eight o'clock or be in bed reading by about eight o'clock so then I would do my marking. It didn't seem unusual but now I think back it was very organised. And yet it wasn't organised to the extent that it was detrimental to either of us.

Margaret: What about when you re-married?

Coralie: I think she still had the same amount of time. I didn't re-marry without asking her what she thought about it. I think if she hadn't liked him and wasn't happy I think we probably wouldn't have got married quickly. Because we met in October and got married in December.

Margaret: The same year?

Coralie: Yes. We met in October - we met on the Friday, he proposed to me on the Tuesday, he was trying to talk me into going off to the Registry office within a couple of weeks. And I said, 'I think we better give the children a chance to think about and get used to the idea'. So we got married in December.

Margaret: So they didn't have a lot of time to get used to the idea really.

Coralie: No.

Margaret: You had a television - what about radio - did she spend much time listening to the wireless?

Coralie: I don't think so because I never listened to the wireless much. It wasn't important to me. She had television right through but it was guided. It wasn't just there all the time. She used to like watching 'Mr. Ed' and things like that. It was guided.

One thing when she was very little, we always used to sit and share the 'Romper Room' and do the things together.

Margaret: What about wider outings - you yourself didn't go to circuses and all those sorts of things?

Coralie: She did. She went to circuses and the theatre and she had the ballet lessons too - not the tap dancing but the ballet lessons. Art gallery, you name it.

Margaret: What about organised sport - did she play?

Coralie: She played netball and I coached the team.



Margaret: Were you ever involved in a Mothers' Club?

**Coralie: No.**

Margaret: She wasn't ostracised from society then. You said before you re-married you had lots of social outings and things.

**Coralie: No. She wasn't.**

Margaret: Going from your parents very strong beliefs about religion etc. What kind of part did that have to play with your bringing up Sue?

**Coralie: She never went to Sunday School - I don't think she ever went to church. Perhaps now and again. Perhaps once or twice.**

Margaret: What about prayers?

**Coralie: No. No bible reading. When Grandma was around I think she used to say her prayers. I think Grandma used to see that she said a prayer. I don't know how long since she said a prayer. (laughter) I was quite anti organised religion.**

It was a bigoted type of Christianity that I saw - no way would I want that. When we talk about it I think we are both highly moral and thoughtful women, ready to believe but not ready to accept all the dogma with an open mind (pause) not ready to accept it all without questioning.

Margaret: Did Sue have birthday parties?

**Coralie: Yes. Unfortunately she nearly always had tonsillitis. (laughter) I had it all organised and on one occasion, it was her birthday, she got up, she was well enough, she stood by the bed and promptly fainted, we had to get the doctor - she had tonsillitis I think for about three years - we had to cancel it. Because of tonsillitis.**

Margaret: When she did how would you organise it?

**Coralie: From the first year she had normal birthday parties, relatives and children from school.**

Margaret: Games?

**Coralie: Yes. Even green jelly with white chocolate frogs. We went to the Show the other day and I said 'do you remember the green jelly?' and she said 'yes, we had white chocolate frogs'. No frog cakes. (laughter) I've never been in the competition to be mother of the year! We'd done the icecream with the cone and the eyes and the bread and butter with hundreds and thousands but...!**

Margaret: Birthday presents, Christmas presents were not a huge ritual for you, but what about Sue?

**Coralie: Never go to the extreme. Even today when you see all these great expensive things - we don't go for that. Nowadays we more tend to sort of 'tell me what you want, I will buy it'.**

Margaret: So she could bring friends home?

**Coralie: Yes. Yes.**

Margaret: And she was invited to other peoples'?

Coralie: Yes. Everything was perfectly normal. I'd make them welcome. It wasn't difficult.

Margaret: What about comics - was she allowed to choose what reading material she wanted or was there a certain amount of guided selection?

Coralie: I think she had comics at one stage but I think it was mainly a trade-off. She always belonged to the library. She was brought up mainly on Enid Blyton books. She read every single thing that Enid Blyton wrote and loved it, enjoyed it.

Margaret: You weren't given pocket money. Was Sue?

Coralie: She got pocket money. Yes. As she got older and she got a scholarship to Pembroke so she was up with the money - I said before she went that you are not going to be able to compete with them so you have just got to realise that, but as she got older and wanting things in the way of clothes it was pretty expensive. I'd always try to find out how much she really wanted it. Like saying 'Are you willing to put five dollars of your money towards it?'. If she was I knew she really did want it. Then I didn't mind spending my money.

Margaret: You didn't belong to any sort of children's youth groups - did she belong to any - like Girl Guides?

Coralie: No. Not Girl Guides. I think she went to Brownies once, but it was only once - she didn't like it. Mainly netball teams.

Margaret: Was she able to go to the movies?

Coralie: Yes. I think to some extent I still protected her in some ways like my parents did. I wouldn't have encouraged her meeting girls from school on a Saturday afternoon to go to the pictures in town. I tended always to know where she was and who she was with although she may not have been aware of that. But not to the extent that I stopped her doing things. I think I was lucky then that the other mothers of the children she was mixing with all had the same standards. There wasn't any conflict.

Margaret: Because of your academic background did you ever look to getting any advice other than what you had yourself come to have about bringing her up?

Coralie: Once I did because for a long time she used to wake up every night and have a nightmare. This was after my illness. She used to wake up screaming and want to leave the house. I think she thought the house was on fire .... this went on for years, and this was one of the reasons I didn't leave her with babysitters.... I stayed with her. It must have started between the ages of three and four, she still had them when we came over here, so it must have been nine or ten. Actually when I think about it, once I married Brian she didn't have them any more. That's interesting.

She used to go to sleep and perhaps three nights out of seven she'd have these nightmares. Mummy, mummy, mummy.' And I'd hold her. So I did go to the Children's Hospital once and talked to a chap about it because I was really concerned. He said that a lot of children had these and the fact that it was only an hour after she went to sleep it was close to the surface. I was really worried about her.

Margaret: Looking back on your parents' life-style with you as a child and yours with Sue and then just looking at kids in general now, what's your impression of how bringing up children and how children's lives have changed?

Coralie: I think childhood is shrinking, which I think is very sad. I don't think children should be made small adults by the time they are ten which is what I see happening. Very sad.

Margaret: What do you think has caused that?

Coralie: I think materialism. I think children are much more materialistic now in that not only do they want everything everybody else has, they want more of it, they want more of it, more expensive and bigger and better (pause) there is a lot of one up manship with children. I sort of feel childhood is a very special and precious time. Although you don't want to make it last until they are eighteen, I think there are stages and I don't think young people are ready to accept all the adult responsibilities at the age of fifteen or sixteen.

Margaret: Are you unhappy that your childhood was when it was - which is rather a difficult question...?

Coralie: I don't think my childhood was very happy or very normal and yet I think I was happy enough with it. I think its not the time as much as the people.

I feel perfectly happy and content with the sort of childhood I gave Sue and in the same way if and when Sue meets someone, gets married and has children, I'd feel perfectly happy and content that she would give those children a wonderful childhood.

Margaret: That's quite an achievement from the way in which you felt about what you went through.

Coralie: Even though I criticised my mother and feel in many respects she was lacking in mothering skills where I was concerned, I had a lot of caring by my father and by some of my brothers and sister. There was a unity - a family togetherness. I suppose that family togetherness is very evident with my eldest brother being really ill. Now we have had a lot of bitterness over many years and yet when he was really ill, everybody came around. Even my youngest brother from Melbourne came over.

So, although in many respects you'd think there wasn't a closeness there, there was.

Margaret: Thank you, Coralie, for sharing yourself with me.

(End of Interview)

## **APPENDIX B**

## APPENDIX B

Return of attendances at Children's Playgrounds from 1st October, 1927 to the 301st December, 1939.

	Glover South Tce	Glover West Tce	Glover East Tce	North Adelaide	Princess Elizabeth
<b>1927</b>					
October		4875	3780	4368	
November	4782	4035	3692	4784	
December	3577	3360	1587	3175	
<b>1928</b>					
January	2351	4590	1333	1716	
February	5209	3460	3116	5875	
March	5367	4646	3984	6966	
April	4703	4200	4373	5256	
May	5056	5715	5495	5562	
June	4538	2850	5265	5642	
July	5210	5770	5486		
August	5047	4260	6190	4941	
September		4310	5095	4250	
October	5299	3130	4630	4546	
November	4951	3210	3957	6396	3582
December	3849	3610	2580	5725	2693
<b>1930</b>					
January	2635	3055	2702	4185	3306
February	3071	1410	1656	5478	1480
March	4985	2720	1980	6318	2232
April	4550	3115	1325	4725	2391
May	4430	4970	3396	4833	3618
June	4784	2410	3610	4500	2498
July	4757	2468	2544	4158	2132
August	4097	4190	3710	4108	2865
September	4986	2192	2850	4472	2349
October	5375	2496	2102	4131	2731
November	4225	2435	2610	4000	2399
December	3643	2340	2670	3536	2301
<b>1931</b>					
January	3683	3451	2700	2754	2729
February	4078	1476	2450	3792	1966
March	4402	1846	2260	4264	2217
April	3673	2181	2630	3925	2438
May	3102	3198	2770	3432	2399
June	3073	1924	2344	3510	2273
July	2928	1798	3020	3926	2451
August	4337	3692	2890	3275	2481
September	5237	1950	2690	3965	2134
October	5378	2570	3480	3942	2830
November	5000	2100	3140	3325	2266
December	3878	3155	1962	3198	2567
<b>1932</b>					
January	2605	3540	2660	2366	2718
February	5327	3150	2038	3675	1333
March	5913	3973	3290	3718	2790

April	4800	2795	3327	3588	2486
May	3247	4715	3590	3406	3653
June	4848	3170	2916	3510	3237
July	4786	3229	3602	3172	3166
August	5124	4470	2925	3537	3059
September	4004	5100	4290	3718	3164
October	5360	3275	3190	3666	2554
November	4826	3670	2625	3807	2352
December	3463	3882	2493	4420	1914

**1933**

January	2578	3638	1996	3328	2725
February	4756	2483	2761	3720	1776
March	6141	3479	3181	4509	2434
April	4879	3057	2642	4056	2225
May	5114	3447	2901	3348	3165
June	5329	3009	2265	4264	2512
July	4897	2099	2151	3978	2170
August	5690	2175	2382	4293	1649
September	4105	2535	2274	3822	2271
October	5127	2146	2838	3978	2436
November	5287	2548	2904	3779	3003
December	4067	2121	2294	3300	1874

**1934**

January	2424	3841	3021	1369	2344
February	5523	1496	3319	4176	1787
March	5271	1894	3354	4134	1895
April	5138	2087	3298	3950	2118
May	5630	3376	4239	4168	3594
June	5070	2164	3078	4056	2527
July	5509	1900	3658	4238	2500
August	4714	1780	3309	3780	2404
September	4485	2736	3311	3750	3148
October	4397	2888	3523	3874	3339
November	4341	2512	2920	3562	2696
December	2422	2606	2207	3325	2559

**1935**

January	3853	3072	3192	2781	3924
February	5598	2429	2934	3792	2805
March	5319	2864	3060	3926	2573
April	4912	2818	3110	3900	2150
May	3903	4209	4539	4077	4015
June	4102	2717	3060	3875	2308
July	4090	2208	3425	4023	2205
August	3833	1489	3195	4023	1953
September	4263	2538	3435	3625	3826
October	5351	1970	3935	3969	3434
November	4702	2028	3850	3666	2562
December	3530	2429	2555	3400	2672

**1936**

January	2911	3483	3092	3186	3787
February	4850	2400	3240	3825	2583
March	5999	2603	3691	4368	2379
April	5067	1783	2876	4100	2032
May	4116	3202	3689	3614	2628

June	4907	1918	3090	3848	1469
July	4339	1579	2930	3888	1481
August	4626	2453	3226	3666	2061
September	3946	3856	4499	3428	3390
October	4821	3228	4690	3618	3448
November	4347	3323	3452	3732	2578
December	3388	3024	2928	3692	2204

**1937**

January	2313	4526	3793	2496	2444
February	5642	2524	3950	3672	2287
March	5745	2616	3480	3852	2007
April	5098	2540	3530	3003	1708
May	3854	4195	2360	2652	2525
June	4252	1819	2819	3770	1811
July	5148	1850	3629	3753	1737
August	4496	1727	2929	3484	1551
September	4162	3248	4297	3562	3114
October	5025	2649	3489	3442	2730
November	5704	2658	2955	3874	2178
December	3906	2638	2440	2730	2146

**1938**

January	1906	3151	1936	832	2398
February	1591	2934	1427	960	1953
March	4025	3295	3209	3387	2643
April	4819	2172	2164	3630	2155
May	4691	3473	3881	3995	1542
June	4261	1831	2947	3555	1437
July	4214	1822	2455	4007	1514
August	4670	1721	2390	4275	1767
September	4775	2803	3296	4309	2793
October	5170	2492	3151	3960	2332
November	5717	2571	2912	4410	2212
December	4386	2752	2703	3658	1928

**1939**

January	1806	3119	1967	1519	1760
February	4650	1939	2812	3923	1611
March	4114	2526	2885	4318	2086
April	3919	2466	2083	3489	1657
May	3925	3276	3036	4143	2544
June	3705	2403	2320	4030	1984
July	4339	1808	1739	3694	1872
August	4615	1408	1920	3961	1712
September	3971	3033	3256	3650	2548
October	3947	2199	2110	3881	2266
November	4139	1465	2463	4901	1939
December	2573	2042	1881	3437	1504

Source : Compiled from ACA Records (Princess Elizabeth Playground records are incomplete from 1937-1939).

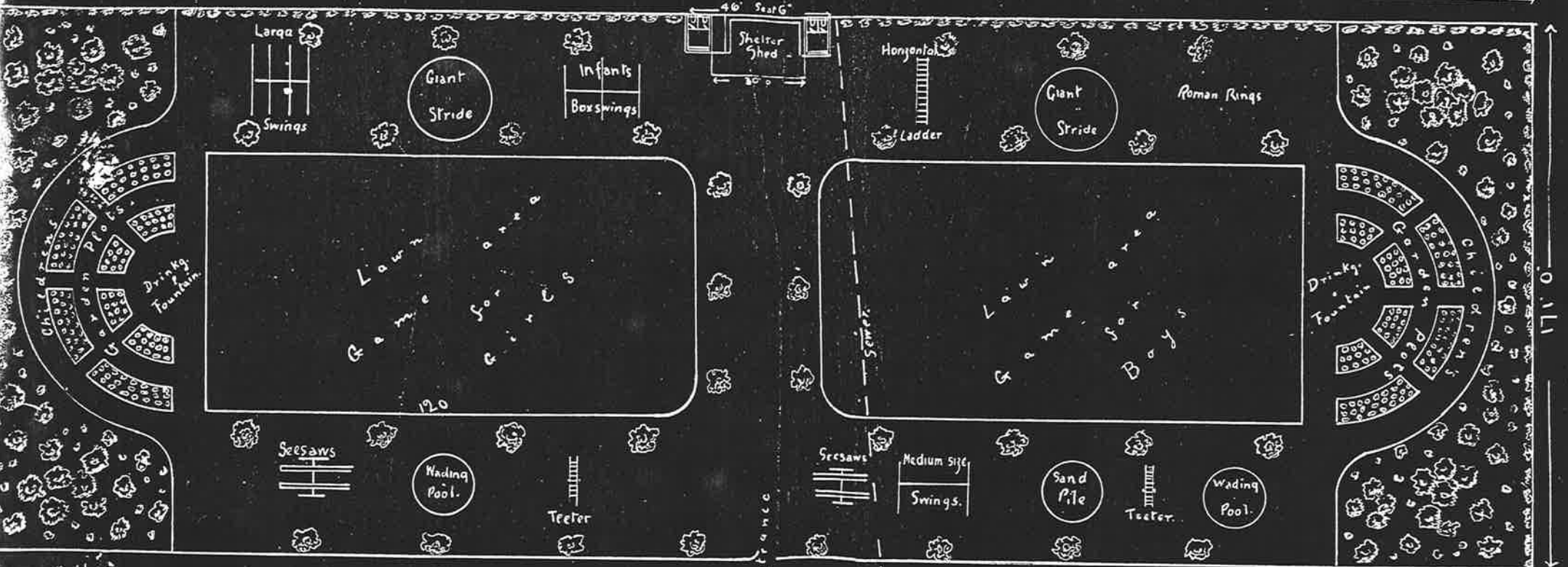
# GLOVER CHILDRENS PLAYGROUND SOUTH TERRACE, ADELAIDE.

422' 6"

46' Seat G

30'

171' 0"



MAP

South Terrace



## APPENDIX C

THE MAIL SATURDAY NOVEMBER 4 1939

# FATHER CHRISTMAS has arrived at JOHN MARTIN

Bringing You **BETTER TOYS** FOR LESS MONEY!



**TOY-O-GRAM**  
TO EVERY FATHER & MOTHER IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA  
SAVE MONEY ON TOYS THIS YEAR STOP THE BIG STORE'S PRICES ARE KEENER THAN EVER - WE'VE SCOUTED TOY MARKETS TO GIVE YOU FINEST SELECTIONS AT LOWEST POSSIBLE PRICES STOP AN ADDITIONAL CONVENIENCE OF COURSE IS OUR LAY-BY PLAN PAYMENT FOR TOYS SHOULD NOW CAN BE SPREAD OVER THE SEVEN WEEKS BEFORE CHRISTMAS.  
JOHN MARTIN'S.

**U.S. ABOVE (TOP)**  
**PS TRICYCLES 67/6**  
The Best Tricycle on the Market...  
**PS PED. PONY 42/6**  
The Best Pedal Pony on the Market...

**"CYCLOPS" Wagon 22/6**  
Franchising All Steel Frame and Toy Length 21 inches width 11 inches and depth 6 inches. 7 inch Drive Wheels, 1 inch Rubber Tyres. Nickel hub caps. Emblazoned in a bright Red tone.

**"CYCLOPS" Scooters at 52/6**  
With heavy steel frame and fork...  
**"CYCLOPS" Motor Cars 39/6**  
The most popular Chevrolet Car...  
NOT ILLUSTRATED

**LAY BY NOW**  
Seven Weeks to Xmas

**"CYCLOPS" Dinkies for 20/-**  
Shooting Sets, Target, Suction Gun, 5/11  
KIDDIES TENNIS RACQUETS, for 2/6  
SEAGRASS PRAMS, Steel Frame, 15/9  
4'6 18 in. Beach Balls, Strong Rubber, 4/11

**MORE OUTSTANDING TOYS!**

<b>1/11</b>	<b>1/11</b>	<b>1/11</b>	<b>1/6</b>
<b>1/11 (two)</b>	<b>1/11</b>	<b>1/6</b>	
<b>1/11</b>	<b>2/11</b>	<b>13/6</b>	



**"Toddles," Canadian Dolls**  
16/6  
**12 inch, SCOTCH DOLLS 15/-**  
**9 inch, "JOAN" DOLLS 1/6**  
**Baby Bunting Dolls for 3/11**  
**DOLLS PRAMS 23/6**

Easy to Operate!  
**CINE PROJECTORS**  
**5/11**  
COWBOY SUITS  
CRICKET BATS  
"DAISY" Pop Guns  
Ball Mosaic Game

**ENG. TRAIN**  
ENGLISH TRAIN SETS  
AMERICAN TRAIN SETS



THE MAIL

# Magazine

Film  
News  
Page 3

Convoy  
System  
Page 5

SUPPLEMENT TO "THE MAIL," ADELAIDE, SATURDAY NOVEMBER 19, 1939.



Big Cricket Is On!

The  
First  
Christmas  
Page 3

THE MAIL  
*Magazine*

Topical  
Short  
Story  
Page 10

SUPPLEMENT TO THE "MAIL," ADELAIDE, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1939.

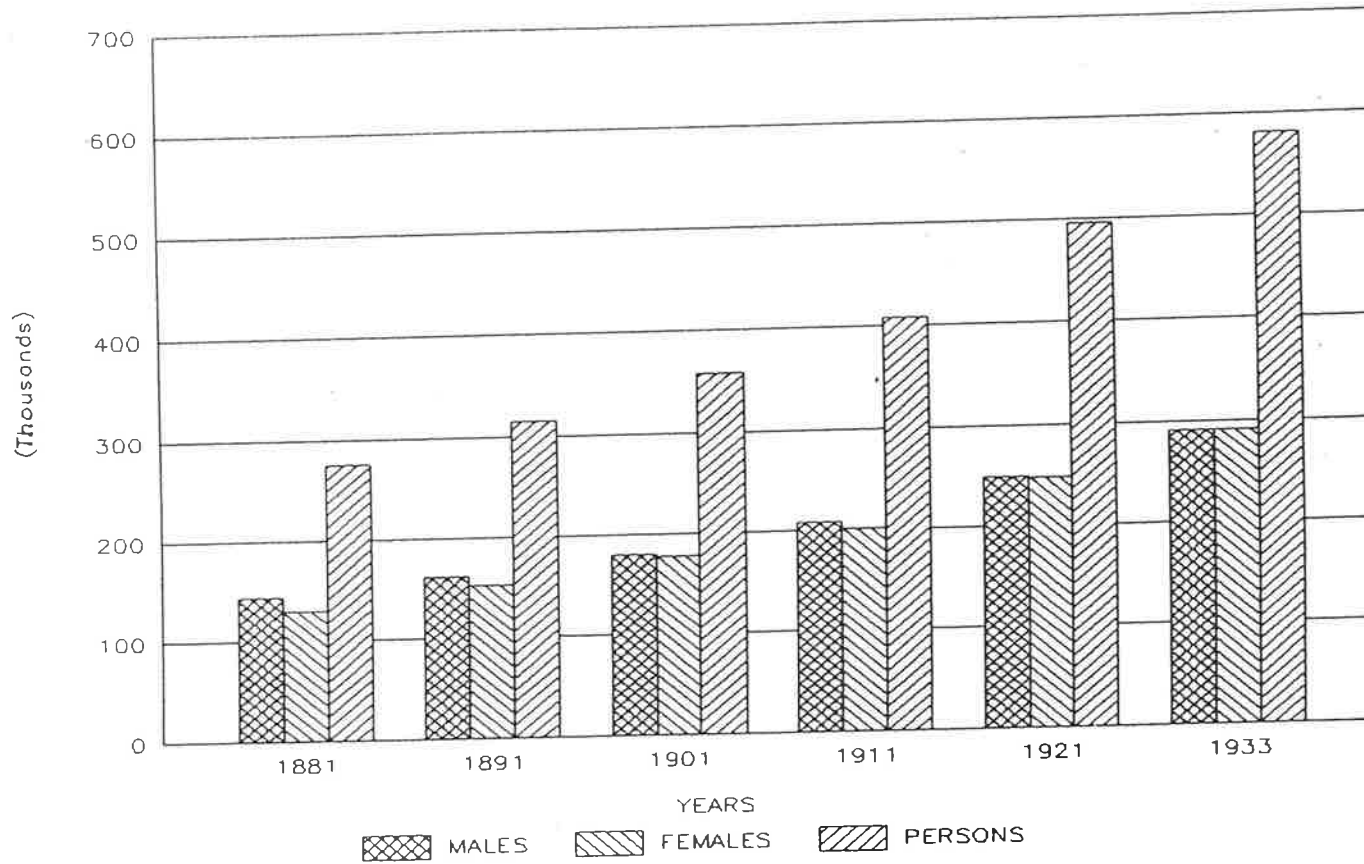


"The Young Idea"



## APPENDIX D

Table D:1 : POPULATION AT CENSUS DATES, 1881-1933



POPULATION AT CENSUS DATES, 1881-1933

YEAR	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921	1933
MALES *	145113	161920	180485	207358	248267	290962
FEMALES *	130231	153292	177485	201200	246893	269987
PERSONS *	275344	315212	357970	408558	495160	580949
SEX RATIO +	111	106	102	103	101	100

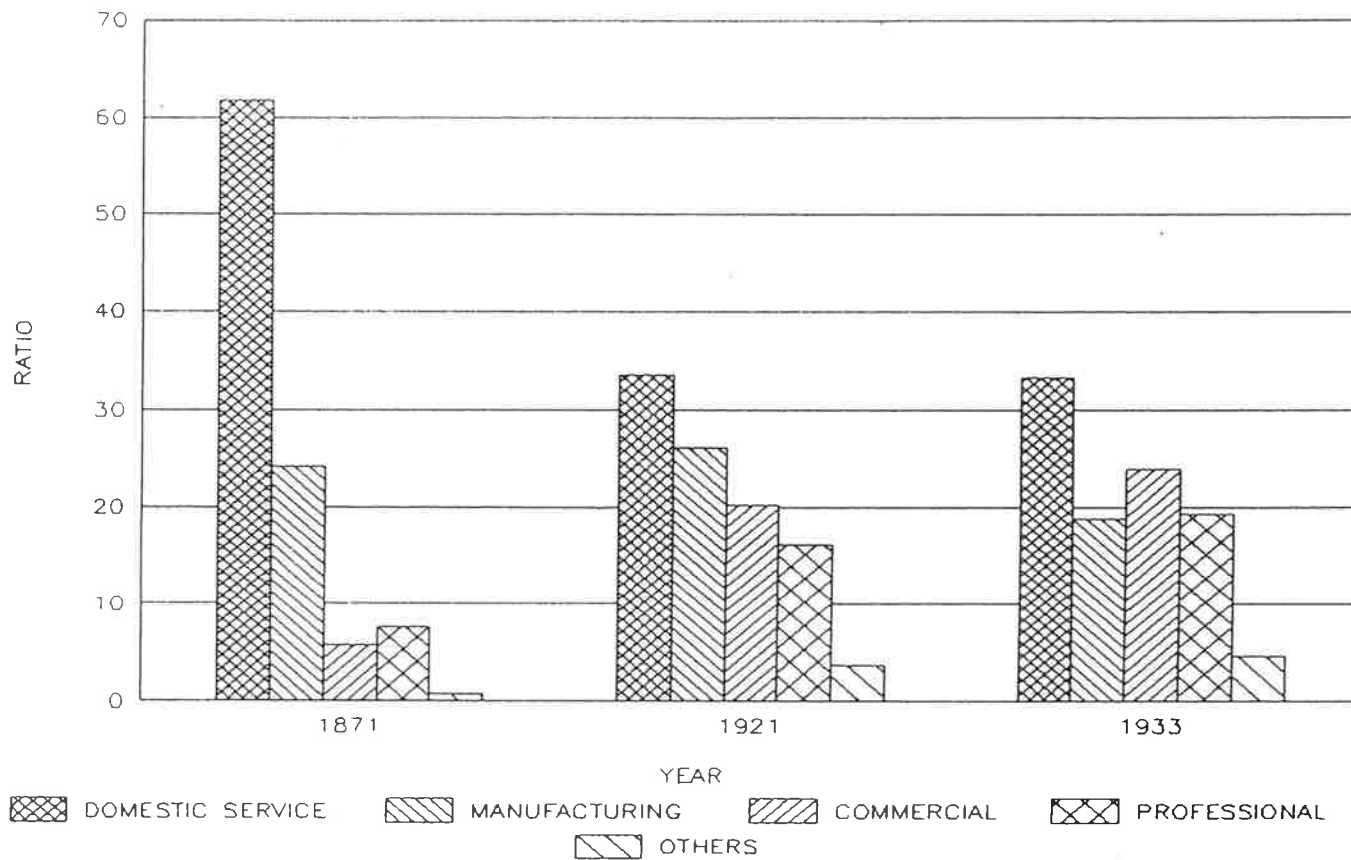
\*Excludes full-blood Aborigines before 1961 Census

+Males per hundred females

Source: Stevenson, 'Population Change Since 1836' in The Flinders



Table D:2 :INDUSTRIAL COMPOSITION OF FEMALE WORKFORCE  
ADELAIDE 1871-1933



**INDUSTRIAL COMPOSITION OF FEMALE WORKFORCE  
ADELAIDE 1871-1933**

YEAR	1871	1921	1933
DOMESTIC SERVICE	61.7	33.5	33.3
MANUFACTURING	24.2	26.1	18.9
COMMERCIAL	5.7	20.3	23.9
PROFESSIONAL	7.6	16.2	19.3
OTHERS	0.7	3.7	4.6

Source: Hancock and Richards 'Wealth, Work and Well being'

Table D:3 :SOUTH AUSTRALIA, STATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS, 1876-1907

YEAR	No. OF SCHOOLS	No. OF TEACHERS	No. OF CHILDREN INSTRUCTED	AVERAGE ATTENDANCE	NET COST TO STATE	COST TO PARENTS-FEES	RATIO CHILDREN PER TEACHER
1876	281	550	25889	13622	52210	12208	47
1877	302	653	27305	14406	60193	13231	42
1878	310	699	34491	16755	72246	16717	49
1879	340	788	35276	18523	71635	17795	45
1880	370	837	36277	19658	77163	18648	43
1881	405	786	36888	20653	80921	19737	47
1882	422	900	38792	21984	81410	21182	43
1883	431	952	41437	24683	84895	23304	44
1884	452	1000	42758	25048	90799	23758	43
1885	472	1021	44106	27005	89515	24798	43
1886	504	1081	44405	28000	90768	23736	41
1887	517	1092	45073	28430	93371	23373	41
1888	536	1081	45236	28329	89578	24101	42
1889	540	1076	44576	28216	91620	24343	41
1890	551	1067	44804	27552	91479	24641	42
1891	552	1106	47094	29801	92831	26667	43
1892	579	1222	53457	35371	125264	593	44
1893	606	1135	56302	34038	126725	702	50
1894	609	1110	57986	37886	123577	1176	52
1895	634	1127	59003	39324	127552	1116	52
1896	639	1132	59944	40449	130194	1233	53
1897	655	1201	61643	42193	135348	1499	51
1898	670	1229	61763	39102	136912	744	50
1899	677	1264	62316	42228	139682		49
1900	690	1259	62439	43104	145260		50
1901	706	1331	63183	43789	149795		47
1902	716	1351	62962	42690	149393		47
1903	715	1320	61977	42752	145626		47
1904	715	1332	60879	42234	146031		46
1905	722	1420	59026	41807	149183		42
1906	708	1426	57270	40489	150542		40
1907	707	1389	54560	37861	150157		39

Source: SAPP, 1908, No. 44, p11. Cited in Pavla Miller *Long Division*, p371.

Source Collated from SAPP, 1908

Table D.4: SOUTH AUSTRALIAN, TEACHERS EMPLOYED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT SELECTED YEARS, 1875-1902

YEAR	ALL TEACHERS			HEAD TEACHERS			PROVISIONAL TEACHERS		
	MALE	FEMALE	%FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	%FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	%FEMALE
1875	218	173	44.2	190	77	28.8	0	0	0.0
1876	243	307	55.8	185	67	26.6	16	20	55.6
1878	300	399	57.1	175	55	23.9	42	50	54.3
1879	328	460	58.4	172	50	22.5	55	79	59.0
1882	370	530	58.9	174	51	22.7	93	117	55.7
1883	384	568	59.7	185	51	21.6	91	117	56.3
1888	405	676	62.5	214	45	17.4	77	203	72.5
1889	409	667	62.0	211	47	18.2	83	205	71.2
1894	426	788	64.9	248	36	12.7	75	252	77.1
1895	414	782	65.4	253	36	12.5	73	270	78.7
1901	402	929	69.8	252	35	12.2	58	358	86.1
1902	411	940	69.6	255	29	10.2	62	360	85.3

Sources: Annual Reports of the Minister Controlling Education, 1876-1903. Cited in Miller, *Long Division*, p372.

Table D.5: SOUTH AUSTRALIA, COMPARISON OF STUDENTS OF SPECIFIED AGES  
IN STATE AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS, 1932-36

YEAR	SCHOOL	AGE					
		12	13	14	15	16	17
1932	PRIVATE	1405	1236	1072	810	663	342
	STATE	9543	7936	4183	2261	1295	521
1933	PRIVATE	1364	1344	1093	841	549	325
	STATE	9517	8518	4046	2026	1161	454
1934	PRIVATE	1302	1331	1255	854	596	311
	STATE	9542	8538	4094	1640	811	354
1935	PRIVATE	1386	1392	1225	868	471	224
	STATE	9322	8487	4067	1792	717	286
1936	PRIVATE	1440	1388	1155	884	627	273
	STATE	9197	8384	4249	1846	804	262

Source: *SAPP, No44 and Statistical Register of South Australia, various years.*

**Table D:6 : SOUTH AUSTRALIA, FULL-TIME ENROLMENTS IN VARIOUS STATE AND PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS, 1915-1939**

TYPE OF SCHOOL	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939
HIGH 1907	2571	3113	3254	3416	3171	2890	3114	3907	3870	4228	4010	4150	4691	5168	5568	6129	6500	6125	5818	5124	5705	5999	6121	6116	6893
HIGHER PRIMARY 1922-69								296	365	368	429	429	458	398	562	630	693	707	664	776	711	789	878	784	871
CENTRAL COMMERCIAL 1925-40											16	45	73	43	23	37			*62	*109	*31		+252	+520	+265
CENTRAL GIRLS HOMEMAKING 1925-40											787	964	1142	1162	1315	1358	1690	1472	1585	1444	1314	1337	1256	1133	1270
CENTRAL BOYS TECHNICAL 1925-40											551	707	850	899	935	1058	1259	1224	1148	1044	937	833	729	648	751
TECHNICAL HIGH-THEBARTON 1924-										103	220	231	350	434	491	450	489	399	403	395	451	458	526	521	582
GIRL'S CENTRAL ART 1928-55														66	63	62	72	64	73	48	43	74	77	81	66
TOTAL -STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS	2571	3113	3254	3416	3171	2890	3114	4203	4235	4699	6013	6526	7564	8170	8957	9724	****	9991	9753	8940	9192	9490	9839	9803	****
TOTAL PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS	3277	3822	4207	4368	4317	4843	4970	5172	5489	5728	5988	6253	6206	6162	5940	5790	5385	5178	4807	4926	5341	5998		6056	6289
% SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN STATE SCHOOL	44.0	44.9	43.6	43.9	42.3	37.4	38.5	44.8	43.6	45.1	50.1	51.1	54.9	57.0	60.1	62.7	66.5	65.9	67.0	64.5	63.2	61.3	****	61.8	63.0

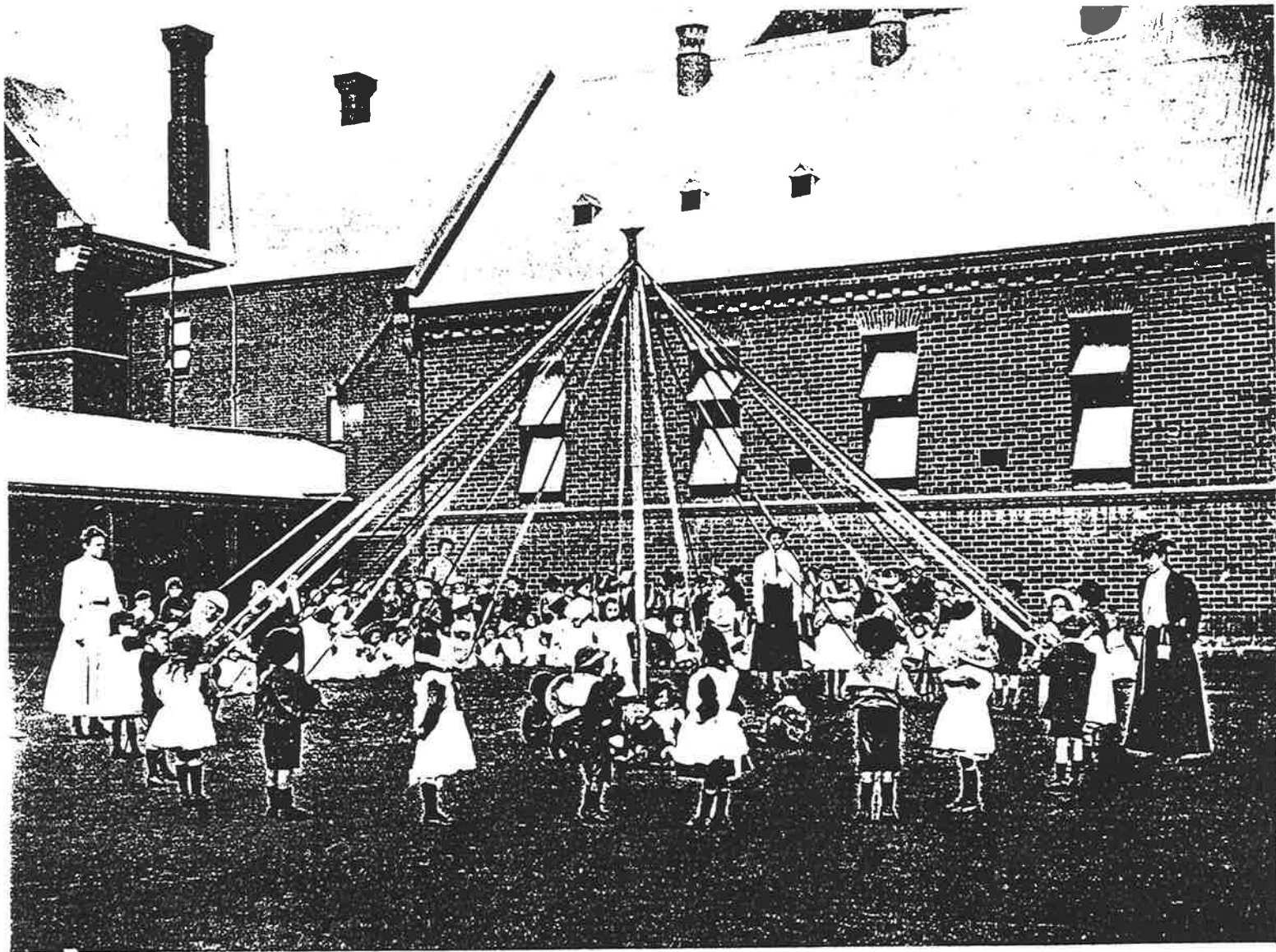
\*Pre-vacational classes

+Youth employment classes

Source: *Statistical Register of South Australia, 1915-39, Cited in Miller, Long Division, pp374-375*



Source SAEG, April 15<sup>th</sup> 1909 Observation School Currie Street, Adelaide  
"The Uncovered Classroom"



SAEG, 1909, OBSERVATION SCHOOL—MAYPOLE DRILL.

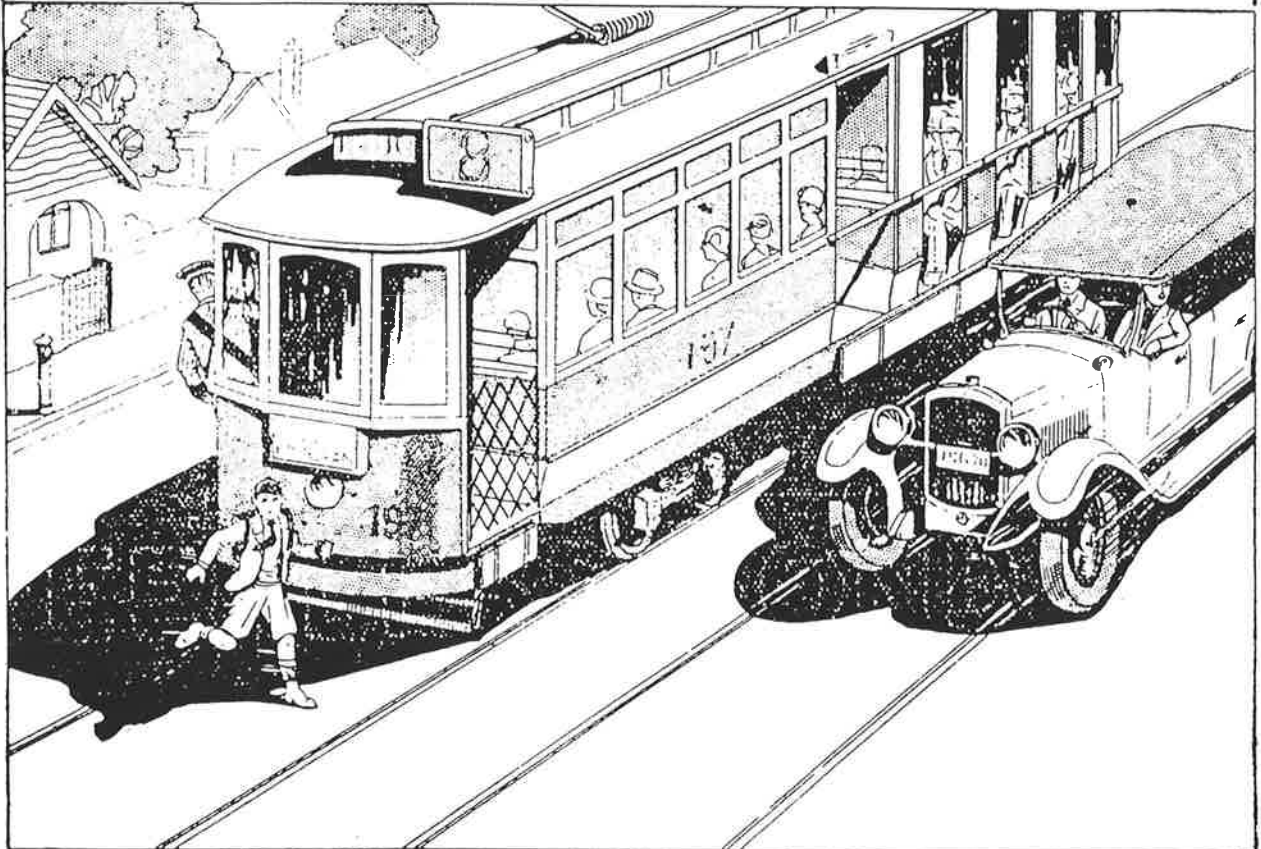
Supplement to the "Education Gazette," 15th March, 1929,

*School Bulletin No. 12—Issued by the Royal Automobile Association of South Australia (Inc.).*

**SAFETY**



**FIRST !**



The boy in the picture has alighted from the tramcar and, without looking for traffic coming from the opposite direction, is running behind the car toward the opposite pavement.

The driver of the motor car will not see the boy until it is too late to stop, as the tramcar hides him from view.

Never pass behind a stationary tramcar without first stopping to see whether the road is clear.

**NEVER RUN ACROSS A STREET**



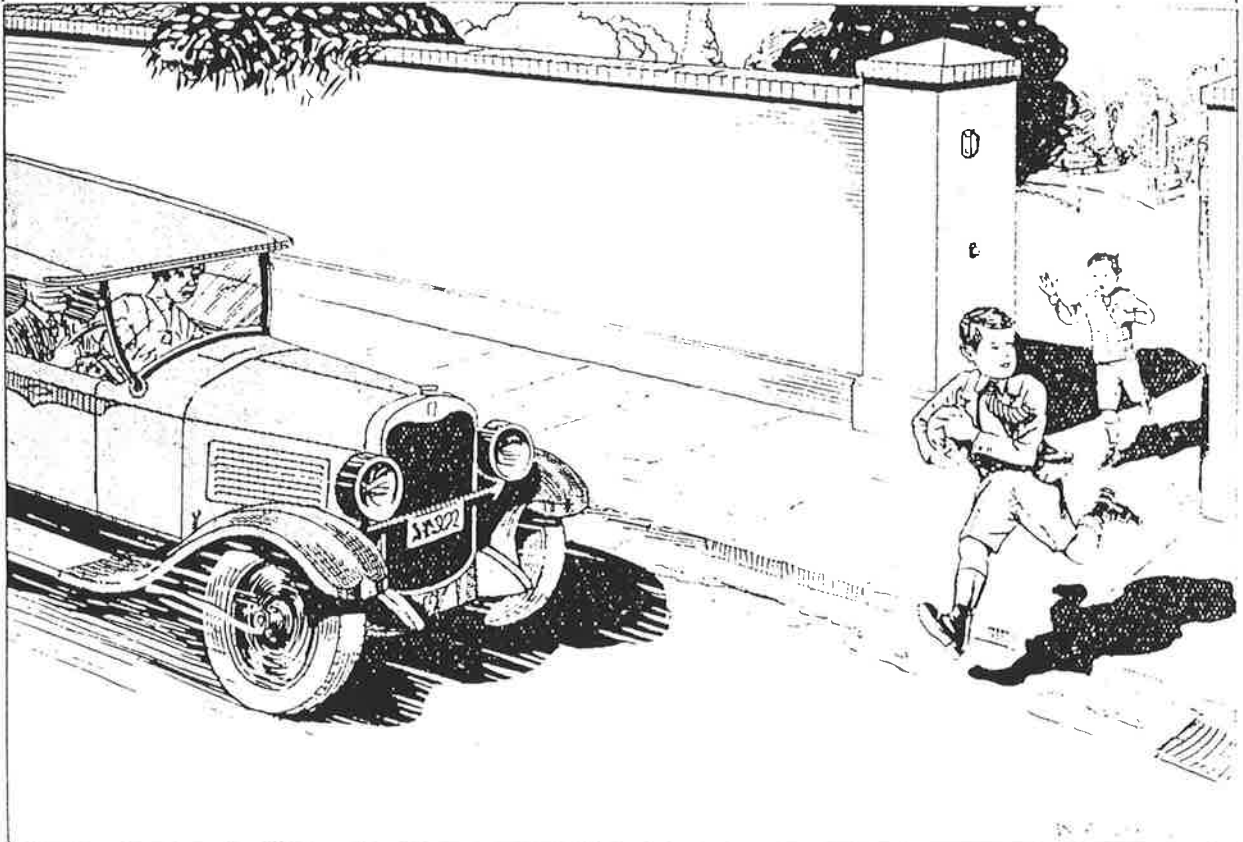
Supplement to the "Education Gazette," 15th June, 1929.

— School Bulletin No. 1, Issued by the Royal Automobile Association of South Australia (Inc.).

**SAFETY**



**FIRST !**



**NEVER PLAY IN STREETS. LOOK BOTH WAYS BEFORE CROSSING.**

The boy in the picture is being chased by his pal and, without looking for traffic, is rushing out of the gates on to the road.

The driver of the car may not be able to pull up in time to avoid running over the boy and seriously injuring or killing him.

**NEVER RUSH OUT OF GATES ON TO THE ROAD.**

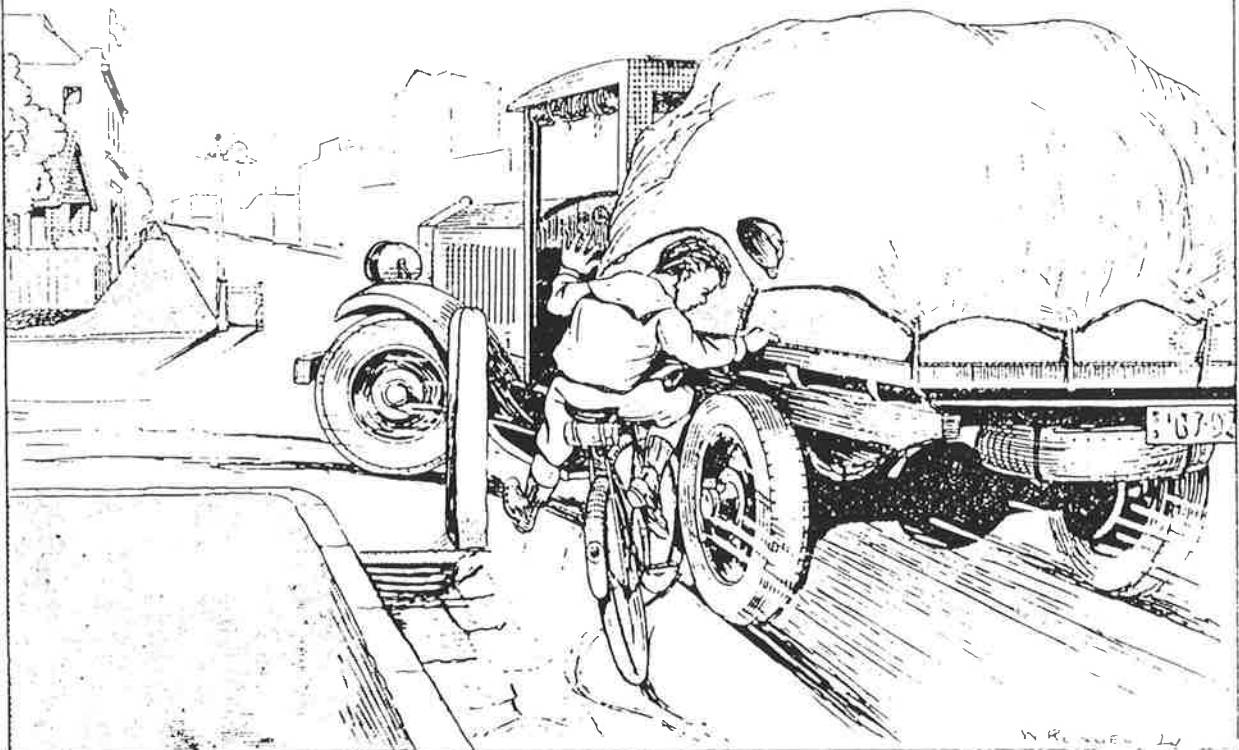
Supplement to the "Education Gazette," 15th July 1929.

— School Bulletin No. 5.— Issued by the Royal Automobile Association of South Australia (Inc.)

**SAFETY**



**FIRST !**



Holding on to a moving vehicle may be an easy way of cycling, but it is likely to lead to disaster, as the boy in the picture has discovered.

The motor lorry has turned to the left; the boy has lost his balance; his bicycle will be smashed and he will be badly hurt.

**NEVER HOLD ON TO A MOVING VEHICLE**

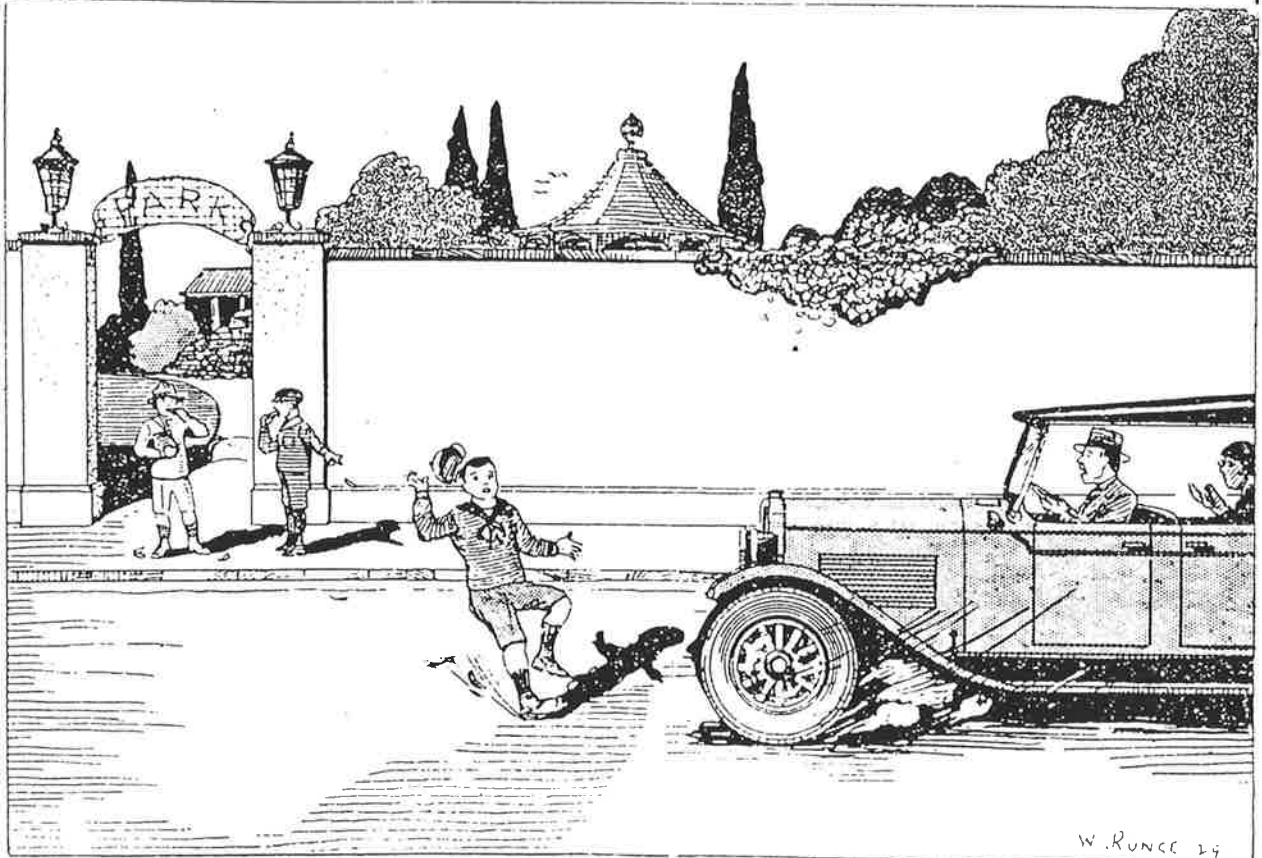
Supplement to the "Education Gazette," 15th August, 1929.]

*School Bulletin No. 6.—Issued by the Royal Automobile Association of South Australia (Inc.).*

**SAFETY**

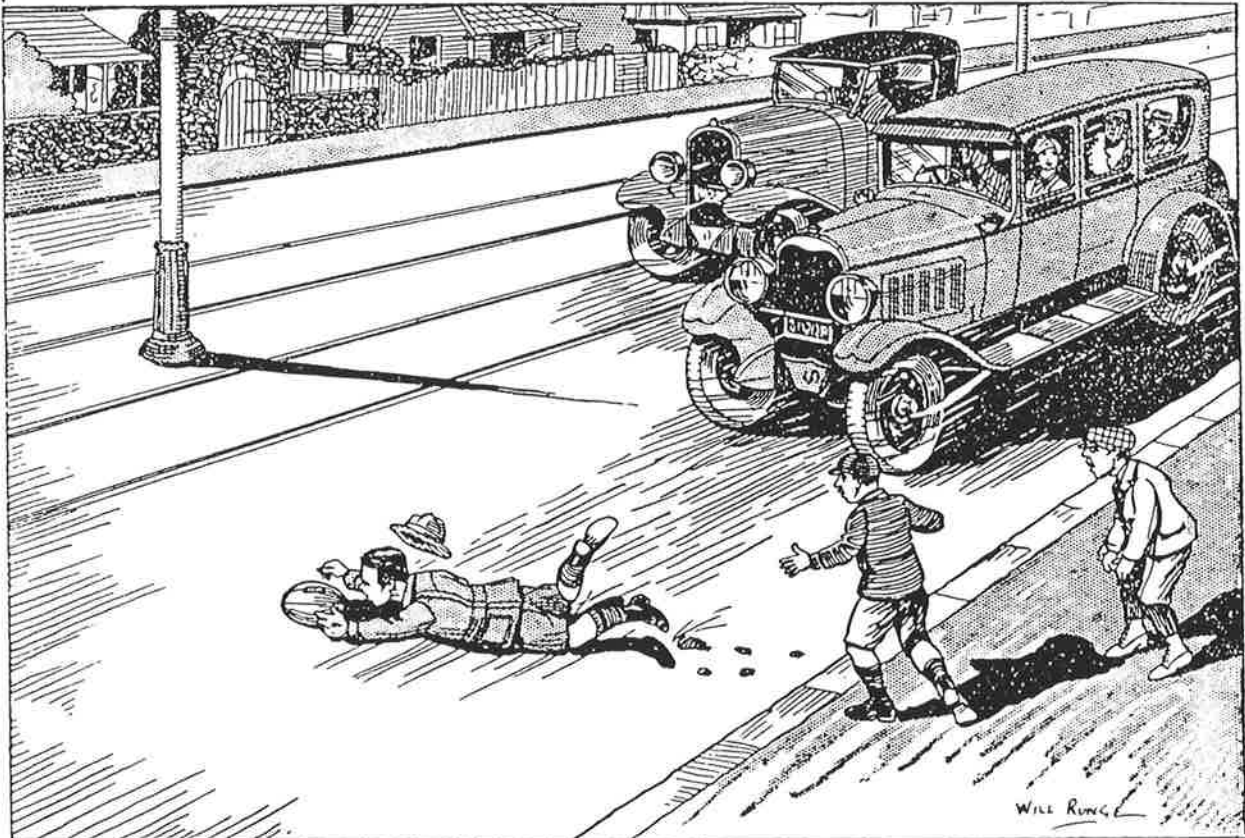


**FIRST !**



**It is dangerous to throw fruit peel on the roadways or footpaths.  
Besides being an untidy and dirty habit, it is likely to cause  
accidents as shown in the picture above.**

**NEVER THROW FRUIT PEEL ON THE ROAD.**

*School Bulletin No. 7.—Issued by the Royal Automobile Association of South Australia (Inc.).***SAFETY****FIRST !**

Playing in the Street is likely to lead to accidents. There may be no traffic in sight, but this does not make the roadway a safe playground. A motor car approaching at 20 miles per hour covers 440 feet in 15 seconds and consequently may not be noticed until it is quite close.

The boy in the picture forgot the danger from fast moving traffic and ran after his ball without first making sure that the road was clear.

**NEVER PLAY IN THE STREET.**

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY****ABBREVIATIONS**

<u>ACA</u>	:	Adelaide City Council Archives.
<u>AGPS</u>	:	Australian Government Publishing Service.
<u>AJE</u>	:	Australian Journal of Education.
<u>AKM</u>	:	Australian Kindergarten Magazine.
<u>AMG</u>	:	Australian Medical Gazette.
<u>AMJ</u>	:	Australian Medical Journal.
<u>ANZHES</u>	:	Australian and New Zealand History of Education.
<u>HER</u>	:	History of Education Review.
<u>JAS</u>	:	Journal of Australian Studies.
<u>JHSSA</u>	:	Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia.
<u>JRAS</u>	:	Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society.
<u>KUSA</u>	:	Kindergarten Union of South Australia.
<u>SAEG</u>	:	South Australian Education Gazette.
<u>SAPP</u>	:	South Australian Parliamentary Papers.
<u>ML</u>	:	Mitchell Library.
<u>MLSA</u>	:	Mortlock Library of South Australiana.
<u>MUA</u>	:	Melbourne University Archives.
<u>PROSA</u>	:	Public Records of South Australia.
<u>SLSA</u>	:	State Library of South Australia.
<u>UAA</u>	:	University of Adelaide Archives.

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- i) ACA  
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- ii) ML  
Playgrounds Association of Australia Papers, MS 610; newspaper clippings 76/d.
- iii) MUA  
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- iv) MLSA  
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v) SLSA  
Children's Literature Collection.

vi) UAA  
University Clippings Book, Union Archives.

**B. NEWSPAPERS (South Australian)**

The Adelaide Observer.  
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The Courier.  
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**C. MAGAZINES**

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David Schubert.  
The Secretary, Port Pirie Playgrounds Association.

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