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THE QUEER CHILD AND HAUT BOURGEOIS DOMESTICITY:
BERTHE MORISOT AND MARY CASSATT

By

Jessica Cresseveur
B.A., University of Louisville, 2000
M.A., University College London, 2003

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of the
College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Louisville
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Humanities

Department of Comparative Humanities
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY

May 2016

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A Dissertation Approved on

April 15, 2016

by the following Dissertation Committee:

Dissertation Director: Jongwoo Kim, PhD

Benjamin Hufbauer, PhD

John Greene, PhD

Michelle Facos, PhD

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my father

John Joseph Cresseveur

who would have been proud to see me achieve this milestone.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation would not have been possible without the guidance of my committee. My chair and faculty adviser Prof. Jongwoo Kim offered constructive criticism, which has made me a better writer, scholar, and educator. Prof. Kim, along with Prof. Benjamin Hufbauer, and Prof. John Greene, are to be thanked for their recommendations of sources to consult to make this dissertation a truly interdisciplinary endeavor. I also owe a debt of gratitude to Prof. Michelle Facos, my outside reader, whose research I have found enlightening. I am honored to have these four brilliant scholars on my committee.

No major research project can be conducted or completed without the services provided by libraries and museums. The staff members of Ekstrom and the Margaret Bridwell Art Library at the University of Louisville deserve my gratitude for their accommodating spirit. I also must thank Missy Zellner, the Archives Assistant at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania. When Internet and database searches proved fruitless, Ms. Zellner was able to provide background information on John Singer Sargent's full-length portrait of Alexander Cassatt, which is housed in the museum.

During my time as a Ph.D. student and as a Graduate Teaching Assistant, discussions with my colleagues have proven immensely helpful to help me maintain a

sense of calmness and also to trigger a few “Eureka” moments. As completion of the program takes us in different directions, I hope that we can remain in contact with one another. They are not only my colleagues and my peers but also my friends.

Last, but certainly not least, I must thank my two dearest friends Sarah Quellan and Amanda Gomez. For over three decades, they have been my collective rock, my inspiration, my sisters. No matter how busy I became with writing and research, which sometimes resulted in weeks of no communication, they never took it personally. Instead, they offered words of understanding and encouragement, as they have since our childhood. It is often said that having one true friend makes a person fortunate. In that case, I am doubly fortunate—and eternally grateful—to have these amazing women in my life.

ABSTRACT
THE QUEER CHILD AND HAUT BOURGEOIS DOMESTICITY:
BERTHE MORISOT AND MARY CASSATT

Jessica M. Cresseveur

April 15, 2016

Since the 1970s, feminist art historians have extensively treated Mary Cassatt and Berthe Morisot. In particular, focusing on class-bound womanhood and domesticity, Griselda Pollock, Linda Nochlin, and Anne Higonnet have provided compelling psychoanalytic, Marxist, and semiotic analyses, seemingly exhausting all potentials for any further historical exploration of these artists. Yet, to date, investigations into the significance of the queer (deviations from normative sociocultural codes of gender identity, sexuality, and reproduction) in the works of Cassatt and Morisot have not been conducted. In this dissertation, queer theory complements the existing scholarship that has focused on the significance of women as mothers in the oeuvres of both artists.

Late nineteenth-century norms concerning masculinity, childhood innocence, and normalization were determined by rigid classificatory boundaries that ensured the existence of binary oppositions (masculine/feminine, child/adult/, human/animal, etc.) and rendered any evidence of nuance as suspect. Using primarily queer and psychoanalytic theories, this dissertation reveals the paradoxes in late nineteenth-century

French and American culture that govern normativity and the strangeness with which established norms imbue behavior that comes “naturally” to the portrayed men and children.

This dissertation is divided into four chapters covering queer patriarchy, childhood innocence, and normalization. Each chapter discusses the problematic nature of established dichotomies to uncover the constructedness of normativity and queerness. Chapter One examines how Cassatt and Morisot depicted the dynamics of fathers and family life amid a “crisis” of masculinity triggered by the aftermath of war, increasingly sedentary lifestyles, and the physical and psychological ramifications of the competitive corporate atmosphere. Chapter Two reveals childhood innocence as a contradiction to heteronormative expectations and explores the significance of animals and childhood sexuality in the dynamics of both constructs. Chapter Three looks at the normalization of children in terms of pedagogy, resistance to normalization, and suppression of the inner animal. Chapter Four illuminates the hidden queerness in depictions of normative play and the significance of “gender-inappropriate” playtime activities.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the 1970s, feminist art historians have extensively treated Mary Cassatt and Berthe Morisot. In particular, focusing on class-bound womanhood and domesticity, Griselda Pollock, Linda Nochlin, and Anne Higonnet have provided compelling psychoanalytic, Marxist, and semiotic analyses, seemingly exhausting all potentials for any further historical exploration of these artists. However, queer approaches, particularly those that investigate childhood and heteronormative masculinity, to these artists' oeuvres remain unexplored. In this vein, queer theory augments the existing scholarship that has focused on the significance of women as mothers in Impressionist painting. This dissertation will reveal the queer attributes in subject matters that are often framed within the discourse of normative bourgeois domesticity in late nineteenth-century French and American visual culture. Specifically, the issues of patriarchy, childhood innocence, normalization, and children's relationships with animals will be addressed. Where applicable, this dissertation will bring in contemporaneous literature and selected works by the men and women in Cassatt's and Morisot's professional circles.

Defining “Queer” and Legitimizing Its Place in Impressionism

Throughout the introduction and succeeding chapters, the word “queer” will refer to deviations from normative codes of the bourgeoisie¹ that governed gender, sexuality, and reproduction in the late nineteenth century. The early queer scholarship of Judith Butler defines the term “queer” to address any concept or action that transgresses normative governance of the body and desire. Due to their constant self-replication in society and culture, these norms are accepted as familiar and thus natural, holding power over individuals to resist deviations and disruptions.² Such deviations need not be sexual, although gender is almost always affected. Nevertheless, norms fail, and subversions take place.

Butler’s scholarship extends to the realm of children, notably in her discussion of performative speech, “statements that, in uttering, also perform a certain action and exercise a binding power.”³ She uses an obstetrician’s declaration of a newborn baby’s sex as a performative act. In other words, by declaring whether a baby is male or female,

¹ The middle classes of France and the United States were stratified generally into the levels of less affluent *petit bourgeois* (such as shopkeepers, artisans, and noncommissioned members of the military) and the wealthier *haut bourgeois* (such as business executives, self-made industrialists, and high-ranking military officers), who controlled the means of production and delegated domestic tasks to household staff. Aspiring white-collar professionals in such positions as middle management occupied the ranks between the two poles. See Patrick J. Harrigan, *Mobility, Elites, and Education in French Society of the Second Empire* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1980), 1–13. Despite the historical scope of the book, the introduction provides a working overview of middle-class composition in nineteenth-century France.

² Judith Butler, “Imitation and Gender Insubordination,” in *The Gay and Lesbian Studies Reader*, ed. Henry Abelove, Michèle Aina Barale, and David M. Halperin (New York: Routledge, 1993).

³ Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 225.

the physician, not biology, makes the baby's sex "so."⁴ Over the course of his or her development into an adult, the child will be expected to conform to norms that society deems appropriate for his or her sex. It is here that the queer child enters the discussion.

Steven Bruhm and Natasha Hurley describe the queer child as "the child whose play confirms neither the comfortable stories of child (a)sexuality nor the supposedly blissful promises of adult heteronormativity."⁵ This very quote problematizes the concept of childhood innocence, itself a social construct that, through the scholarship of Anne Higonnet⁶ and Katherine Bond Stockton,⁷ among others, we can easily place as a key issue in the concept of the queer child. Citing James Kincaid, Stockton describes innocence as "'negative inversions' of adult attributes ... [such as] guilt, sinfulness, knowingness, experience, and so on."⁸ In other words, innocence is defined as an absence, as opposed to a presence. Desire, knowledge, and other aspects of adulthood have not yet formed in this mythical child. It is John Locke's *tabula rasa* prior to being imprinted with life's experiences and adult projections of what childhood should be, as opposed to what it actually *is*. Innocence as a *tabula rasa* will prove helpful in this dissertation when considering adult actions toward children, such as dressing them in outdated or parodic attire for portraits intended for posterity or mold them into heteronormative adults while simultaneously expecting them to lack carnal knowledge.

⁴ Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, 232.

⁵ Steven Bruhm and Natasha Hurley, "Curiouser: On the Queerness of Children," in *Curiouser: On the Queerness of Children* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), ix.

⁶ Anne Higonnet, *Pictures of Innocence: The History and Crisis of Ideal Childhood* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998).

⁷ Kathryn Bond Stockton, *The Queer Child, or Growing Sideways in the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009).

⁸ James Kincaid, "Producing Erotic Children," in *Curiouser*, 10; qtd. in Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 12.

To assume or expect innocence in children is to queer what is presumed to come “naturally” to them. For example, if normative conventions demand that children be asexual, common activities such as playing with dolls become queer.⁹ In a normative context, girls use dolls for a number of purposes, such as acting out pseudo mother-and-child relationships. Such a situation is problematic because the presence of offspring requires reproduction—a process with which a sexually innocent child would presumably be unfamiliar. Moreover, to treat one’s doll as one’s child is to imply that one has reproduced without sexual intercourse and, thus, deviated from heteronormative behavior that one will be expected to exhibit upon reaching puberty. By extension, the very expectation that children behave like heteronormative adults during playtime queers their chronological development and further reveals the constructedness of childhood innocence.¹⁰

In addition to innocence, the concept of the queer child also involves a desire to delay development into adulthood, a phenomenon that Stockton calls “growing sideways,” as opposed to “growing up.” Whereas “growing up,” she explains, refers to the vertical growth of the body as it progresses from childhood to adulthood, “growing sideways” is actually the more realistic concept, referring to lateral nature of psychic and neurological growth over the course of a human lifespan. “Growing sideways,” with its ability to span horizontal distances in any direction, “suggests that the width of a person’s experience or ideas, their motives or their motions, may pertain to any age, bringing

⁹ For more on “the child queered by innocence,” see Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 15, 30–33.

¹⁰ Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 15, 30–33.

‘adults’ and ‘children’ into lateral contact of surprising sorts.”¹¹ Just as psychoanalysis describes the unconscious as unchanged by historical shifts,¹² the effects of “sideways growth” are unchanged by shifts in the ageing process. Thus, an adult might “regress” into adolescent or childlike “immaturity,” or an adolescent might refuse to assume the “responsibilities” of adulthood. Such “sideways growth,” Stockton observes, often involves animal companions, such as horses or dogs, because the growth of humans and animals do not parallel each other. As such, the animal becomes the child’s ally or, in some cases, metaphors for the child whose innermost desires will not be fulfilled in his or her future as a human adult.¹³

The refuge that the queer child takes in the animal delays the child’s reproductive potential, which marks its teleology. Bruhm and Hurley point out that the dominant culture places greater importance on the child’s presumed heterosexual future than it does on the child’s present.¹⁴ Lee Edelman explains that this fixation has brought about the “image of the Child,” an idealized construct “entitled to claim full rights to its future share in the nation’s good, though always at the cost of limiting the rights ‘real’ citizens are allowed.”¹⁵ Therefore, it follows that parents or other agents of normalization would regularly monitor the child’s behavior for elements of queerness and work to contain such “aberrations” in an effort to ensure the child’s future as a heterosexually

¹¹ Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 11.

¹² Sigmund Freud, “The Unconscious,” in *The Norton Psychology Reader*, ed. Gary Marcus (New York: W. W. Norton, 2006), 12–17.

¹³ Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 53.

¹⁴ Bruhm and Hurley, “Curiouser,” xiv.

¹⁵ Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 11.

reproducing adult. In other words, the normative child is a product of constructs whose objective is a perpetual cycle of heteronormative reproduction.

Review of Existing Art Historical Scholarship

Analyses of the role of gender in the oeuvres of late nineteenth-century Western artists, which help to lay the foundation for this dissertation, have been common since the early 1970s. The earliest approaches were feminist critiques, focusing on such topics as the power dynamics between artists and models or on how the sex of the artist influenced his or her subject matter. While Laura Mulvey's analysis of the gaze prompted many art historians to explore the dynamics of the active male viewer and the passive female sitter,¹⁶ scholars such as Tamar Garb and Norma Broude brought to light possible subversive attributes that endow usually objectified models with a sense of subjectivity.¹⁷

More relevant to this dissertation, Griselda Pollock points out norms governing decorum that restricted women artists to domestic interiors, private gardens, public green spaces, and theatre scenes. Male artists, on the other hand, had access to pubs, cafs, and brothels—locations self-respecting women did not frequent.¹⁸ Pollock and Roszika Parker explore the compression of space in Cassatt's oeuvre as a metaphor for the

¹⁶ Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 16, no. 3 (Autumn 1975): 6–18.

¹⁷ For examples, see Garb's analysis of Morisot's depictions of women at their toilettes in *Bodies of Modernity: Figure and Flesh in Fin-de-Sicle France* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 128–130; and Broude's exploration of Degas's depictions of naked and scantily clad bathers in "Degas's 'Misogyny,'" *The Art Bulletin* 59, no. 1 (March 1, 1977): 95–107, doi:10.1080/00043079.1977.10787374.

¹⁸ Griselda Pollock, "Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity," in *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and the History of Art* (London: Routledge, 1988), 50–90.

strictures under which bourgeois women and children were expected to live at the time.¹⁹

In a similar vein, Kathleen Adler and Garb point out how Morisot distances her models from the urban spectacle, situating them on balconies or other raised vantage points. By contrast, in Édouard Manet's paintings set in similar vicinities, the artist's vantage point is in the center of the activity of the public sphere.²⁰

The works discussed in this dissertation are set primarily within domestic interiors and private gardens—spaces that comprise the majority of Cassatt's and Morisot's oeuvres. Interiors of bourgeois homes represent the private sphere, “hearth” of family life, with which the lives of women and children were largely associated. Private family gardens, despite their outdoor locations, were seen as extensions of the domestic sphere, due in part to the long-held connection between women and nature. A significant amount of scholarship exists addressing mothers (or nannies) and children within these spaces, from “sentimental” interactions in the work of Cassatt to a perceived “disengagement” between figures in Morisot's work.

In her early scholarship, Nancy Mowll Mathews initially frames Cassatt's late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century depictions of mothers and children as “Modern Madonnas,” a turn-of-the-century theme that secularized the Christian Madonna and Child theme of early modern European art and recast it to fit the context of the modern bourgeois family. Although Mathews acknowledges the pro-natalist embrace of the “Modern Madonna” amid the national panic over a feared depopulation “crisis,” she also points out that feminist groups promoted the dignity and respect that the subject brought

¹⁹ Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2013).

²⁰ Kathleen Adler and Tamar Garb, *Berthe Morisot* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), 109.

to mothers and motherhood. However, despite these nods to heteronormative tradition, she continues, many of Cassatt's mother-and-child depictions aim to recognize and honor the "sacrifice[s]" of motherhood without promoting it as a compulsory role for women.²¹

While the child in Mathews's research plays an ambivalent role to the modern mother, Harriet Scott Chessman argues that Cassatt illuminates its role in the desexualization of the female body despite the role that sexual activity plays in reproduction. As in most depictions of the Madonna and Child, Cassatt's secularized versions manipulate directional lines to guide the viewer's attention to the child, while the maternal figure assumes a secondary role. Cassatt further makes her point by placing the body of the child between the viewer and the body of the woman holding the child and reappropriating themes that traditionally used the female nude (such as the bather), replacing the traditional model with the naked or semi-naked child. Chessman further points out that Cassatt's depictions of motherhood are "constructed." That is, despite the availability of biological mothers and children in Cassatt's social and familial circles, the women and children in many of these portrayals (as opposed to portraits) bear no relation—by blood or by domestic employment—to one another. In other words, Chessman hypothesizes, Cassatt's choice to use unrelated "family" groups underscore the possibility that her depictions "represent not what motherhood was, but what she constructed it to be."²²

²¹ Nancy Mowll Mathews, *Mary Cassatt and the "Modern Madonna" of the Nineteenth Century* (Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1980), ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

²² Harriet Scott Chessman, "Mary Cassatt and the Maternal Body," in *American Iconology: New Approaches to Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature*, ed. David C. Miller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 239–258. Quoted material appears on page 243.

Scholars who have written about Morisot often discuss the ambiguities that defined her as an individual. While she loved painting, enjoyed a successful career, and played a “key” role in the Impressionist exhibitions,²³ neither Morisot’s biographers nor primary sources point to any revolutionary desires the artist might have held. Regardless of her personal beliefs, her oeuvre contains many novel attributes that appear throughout the existing scholarship. Of particular relevance to this dissertation are her depictions of her husband Eugène Manet and their daughter Julie, which Linda Nochlin, Adler, and Garb highlight as rare representations of fatherhood.²⁴ While portraits of fathers and their children are not unusual in late nineteenth-century art, they lack the sense of nurturing and active engagement suggested by Manet in Morisot’s work. Aside from these rare moments, Morisot’s oeuvre largely avoids the overly sentimental. Anne Higonnet and Anne Schirrmester discuss in detail the influence that Morisot drew from fashion plates in terms of their sense of disengagement between and unconventional positioning of human figures.²⁵ While a number of Morisot’s contemporaries also modeled their subject matter after that of fashion plates,²⁶ her methods will play a significant role in Chapter Four.

²³ Adler and Garb, *Berthe Morisot*, 72.

²⁴ Linda Nochlin, “Morisot’s Wet Nurse: The Construction of Work and Leisure in Impressionist Painting,” in *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988), 37–56; Adler and Garb, *Berthe Morisot*.

²⁵ Higonnet, *Berthe Morisot’s Images of Women* (Harvard University Press, 1994), 84–112; Anne Schirrmester, “La Dernière Mode: Berthe Morisot and Costume,” in *Perspectives on Morisot*, ed. T. J. Edelstein (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1990), 103–115.

²⁶ Karin J. Bohleke alludes to the influence that Paul Cézanne and Claude Monet drew from fashion plates, as well. See “Americanizing French Fashion Plates: ‘Godey’s’ and ‘Peterson’s’ Cultural and Socio-Economic Translation of ‘Les Modes Parisiennes,’” *American Periodicals* 20, no. 2 (January 1, 2010): 121.

Where feminist approaches involve bourgeois children, scholars frame them primarily in terms of the roles they played in relation to their parents or the domestic staff who cared for them. Investigations into representations of children as independent subjects (for lack of a better description) remain in the minority. Greg M. Thomas's *Impressionist Children* stands out as a compelling exploration and critique of children in late nineteenth-century visual culture, often contrasting the work of Cassatt and Morisot with that of their male contemporaries yet carefully avoiding essentialism at the same time. His use of feminist and psychoanalytic theory provides unprecedented insight into children's roles as future bourgeois adults, objects of the panoptical gaze, and symbols of their parents' prosperity. Additionally, he explores the underresearched topic of the significance of depictions of bourgeois fathers and father figures with their children or charges.²⁷

In his discussion on representations of girls in late nineteenth-century visual culture, Thomas sets Cassatt and Morisot apart from many of their male contemporaries in their tendency to endow their young female models with a sense of subjectivity. The final quarter of the nineteenth century witnessed the introduction of lifelike porcelain and bisque dolls to the rapidly growing toy market. Thomas observes a widespread tendency of artists to model their young female sitters after these dolls with a variety of results. Pierre-Auguste Renoir's portraits, for example, represent "commodified" girls whose actions establish them as objects of the heteronormative male gaze. On the other hand, Cassatt's models combine realistic self-consciousness or defiance of behavioral norms with their doll-like faces, and Morisot's oeuvre depict Julie "as an evolving individual,"

²⁷ Greg M. Thomas, *Impressionist Children: Childhood, Family, and Modern Identity in French Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

as opposed to a commodified type.²⁸ In both instances, Cassatt's and Morisot's oeuvres of girls are differentiated from Renoir's by their representations of unique people with human imperfections.

Representations of mothers (or models performing motherhood) and children outnumber depictions of fathers and children, which might explain the dearth of scholarship dedicated to the latter category. In her biography of Cassatt, Mathews discusses *Portrait of Alexander Cassatt and His Son Robert Kelso Cassatt* (1885) only in the context of the artist's dissatisfaction with the portrait and its two predecessors.²⁹ References to Morisot's portraits of domestic patriarchy, as discussed in the scholarship of Nochlin, Adler, and Garb, are brief in relation to larger feminist analyses. In fact, extensive research into such portraits was largely absent from the record until the publication of *Impressionist Children*. However, Thomas only dedicates one chapter to the inclusion of fathers and father figures and, although his analyses on Degas's portraits of Ludovic Lepic and his daughters provide part of basis for the arguments in Chapter One, does not use queer approaches in his analyses.³⁰ This dissertation fills the gap that exists in terms of how Cassatt and Morisot depict men in their roles as husbands and fathers vis-à-vis representations produced by contemporaneous male artists and beliefs concerning masculinity. Where the existing scholarship examines children in both artists' oeuvres as extensions of their mothers, this dissertation analyzes how their depictions of children as isolated subjects compare to dominant normative paradigms.

²⁸ Thomas, *Impressionist Children*, 57–67.

²⁹ Mathews, *Mary Cassatt: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 172.

³⁰ Thomas, *Impressionist Children*, 157–191.

Of all the sources referenced for this dissertation, Garb's *Bodies of Modernity* is the only book that extensively explores the roles of men in terms of dynamics of gender normativity in late nineteenth-century visual culture. Due to rigidly defined dichotomies, individuals were compelled to identify their gender through their outward appearances and mannerisms. Men displayed their masculinity and virility through "deep voices, a developed musculature, a ruddy complexion and a beard, and ... the qualities of courage and generosity." They were to dress conservatively and avoid ornamentation such as jewelry, which was "associated with women and 'inferior peoples.'" Deviations from these characteristics warranted suspicion of "sick[ness]" and "pervers[ion]," regardless of perceived sexual orientation.³¹ While Garb explains the significance of male fertility in the wake of France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War and perceived depopulation, she does not address depictions of fathers and children in domestic settings.³²

This dissertation fills a lacuna in the existing scholarship to address the queer as it relates to children and patriarchs in the oeuvres of Cassatt and Morisot. To accomplish this objective, each chapter will identify the norms for its respective topic and argue why their selected works are queer. As necessary, this dissertation will address contemporaneous literature and the wider scope of visual culture to include photography and popular prints. Critical theorists referenced in the following chapters include Stockton, Butler, and Edelman (queer theory); Sigmund Freud, Melanie Klein, Jacques

³¹ Garb, *Bodies of Modernity*, 33–36.

³² A brief allusion to a family group on the cover of a turn-of-the-century men's fitness magazine implies that the "protective father, doting mother, and two fair-haired children" are the picture of the normative French ideal. However, the discussion focuses on the significance of the male physique during the era's "crisis" of masculinity. See Garb, *Bodies of Modernity*, 60.

Lacan, and D. W. Winnicott (psychoanalytic theory), Michel Foucault (panopticism), and Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (early critical animal studies).

Chapter Summaries

Chapter One examines the notion of queer patriarchy in Cassatt's portrait of her brother Alexander and his son Robert and Morisot's portraits of her husband and daughter. Alexander Cassatt lived the life of a normative American bourgeois patriarch as the Vice President of the Pennsylvania Railroad before temporarily retiring in the 1880s.³³ In this portrait, Cassatt and his son sit within close proximity of each other, but both betray facial expressions and body language of emotional distance and uneasiness. On one level, this lack of interaction conforms to normative patriarchy; however, it simultaneously points to deviations from behavioral norms expected of bourgeois executives and their sons who would presumably follow their fathers into the business world. Manet, on the other hand, defied normative conventions by abstaining from paid employment,³⁴ supporting his wife's career and actively participating in Julie's upbringing. This alone queers his role as a bourgeois husband and father. Morisot further queers this relationship in her portraits by placing her husband in the family garden, surrounded by thriving vegetation and thus disrupting the norm that associates nature with women and normative femininity. Unlike the strained relationship between the

³³ Michael Bezilla, "Cassatt, Alexander Johnston," *American National Biography Online*, February 2000, <http://www.anb.org/articles/10/10-00269.html>.

³⁴ Rosalind de Boland Roberts and Jane Roberts, "Introduction," in *Growing up with the Impressionists: The Diary of Julie Manet*, trans. Rosalind de Boland Roberts, and Jane Roberts (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1987), 12, 21. While Roberts and Roberts cite the Manet family fortune as the primary reason for Eugène's never having engaged in a paid occupation, they also note his chronic poor health, which rendered him an invalid for much of his daughter's life.

Cassatts, Manet and Julie appear relaxed and content with each other's company, characteristics supported in Julie's diary entries years later.³⁵

To put their queerness into perspective, this chapter also compares these portraits to contemporaneous amateur and professional photographs of bourgeois families, including one that portrays the Morisot-Manet family in the early 1880s. Late nineteenth-century family photographs typically depict their sitters in a hierarchical formation, often with the patriarchs standing or sitting on a slightly elevated platform behind their wives and children. Such pyramidal arrangements place the pictorial focal points, as well as familial power, with the patriarchs while depicting the remainder of the family as dependents. Although Morisot and Manet did not conform to normative familial roles, their family photograph conforms to the normative arrangement. In this chapter, the hierarchical configurations in the Morisot-Manet photograph and a professional photograph of the prominent Lesseps family (1882) are explored by way of the role of the gaze and Panopticism, as Foucault discusses in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*.

Because the concept of childhood innocence plays a significant role in the analysis of the queer child, Chapter Two focuses on this concept. Higonnet exposes childhood innocence as a social construct that came to prominence in the West during the Romantic era.³⁶ She points out the innocent child's seemingly proper place in a state of nature, removed from the corrupting "adult" world of culture,³⁷ which renders the child

³⁵ Julie Manet, *Growing up with the Impressionists: The Diary of Julie Manet*, ed. Roslind de Boland Roberts and Jane Roberts, trans. Rosalind de Boland Roberts and Jane Roberts (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1987), 46.

³⁶ Higonnet, *Pictures of Innocence*, 15.

³⁷ Higonnet, *Pictures of Innocence*, 15, 17.

oblivious to matters of death, sexuality, and the present itself. Among the bourgeoisie, visual artists, writers, and other cultural authorities turned the child into “the sign of a bygone era.”³⁸ In other words, childhood innocence is a form of often romanticized nostalgia.

Cassatt’s *Ellen Mary Cassatt in a White Coat* (1896)³⁹ and *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* (1878)⁴⁰ disrupt this norm by depicting their sitters in a sense of discomfort and imbuing them with a suggestion of adult knowledge. Both paintings reveal the unidealized reality that adults often ignore when imagining the innocent child. The inclusion of an antique chair in *Ellen Mary Cassatt in a White Coat* would ordinarily isolate the child in the past, but the child’s awkward pose and serious countenance bring her to a degree of parity with the adult viewer in the present. The provocative pose of the unidentified sitter in *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* obviously counteracts any notion of innocence but simultaneously refuses to engage the heteronormative male gaze by directing her unhappy gaze toward the dog sleeping across from her.

Because the innocent child is an extension of nature, conventional wisdom allied it with the non-human animal kingdom. During the final quarter of the century, the changing concept of childhood in both France and the United States involved a perceived connection between children and animals. Many French biologists relied on Darwinian theory to draw parallels between children and animals, using infantile speech and

³⁸ Higonnet, *Pictures of Innocence*, 27.

³⁹ Cassatt, *Ellen Mary Cassatt in a White Coat*, 1896, oil on canvas, 81.28 x 60.33cm, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

⁴⁰ Cassatt, *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair*, 1878, oil on canvas, 88 x 128.5cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

reasoning capabilities as examples of similarities between the species.⁴¹ In a similar vein, advocates for an abused New York child were forced to argue for her protection from abusive guardians by using laws against cruelty to animals, largely because conventional wisdom placed children among the “animal species.”⁴² The child-animal relationship arguably manifests in Morisot’s *Les Pâtés de Sable (Sand Pies)* (1882),⁴³ in which Julie’s dress appears to assume wing-like qualities and an avian form hovers in front of her as she plays in the sand. These attributes are examined vis-à-vis the theory of “becoming-animal” as posited by Deleuze and Guattari.⁴⁴ Creative activities, such as the one in which Julie engages, can initiate a becoming regardless of whether the individual is aware that it is occurring.⁴⁵ Deleuze and Guattari explain that “becoming-animal” is a molecular process, as opposed to physical shape shifting.⁴⁶ Therefore, the avian qualities that manifest in this painting must be interpreted as symbolic.

In addition to the child-animal relationship, *Les Pâtés de Sable* also addresses the issue of mortality, which in turn contradicts the child’s teleology of heteronormative reproduction.⁴⁷ An entry in Julie’s diary alludes to the enjoyment she experienced while

⁴¹ Marion Thomas, “Are Animals Just Noisy Machines?: Louis Boutan and the Co-Invention of Animal and Child Psychology in the French Third Republic,” *Journal of the History of Biology* 38, no. 3 (October 1, 2005): 437.

⁴² Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 65.

⁴³ Morisot, *Les Pâtés de Sable (Sand Pies)*, 1882, oil on canvas, 92 x 73cm, private collection.

⁴⁴ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, “1730: Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal, Becoming-Imperceptible...,” in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 232–309.

⁴⁵ Steve Baker, “What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?,” in *Representing Animals*, ed. Nigel Rothfels (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002), 67–98.

⁴⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, “1730,” 237–239.

⁴⁷ Edelman, *No Future*.

playing in the sand and the comfort it would bring her if she were to lose her mother.⁴⁸

The intention to cope with death by creating ephemeral objects recalls Freud's case study popularly known as *fort/da*, in which a child removed his stringed toy from his field of vision for increasing intervals of time before pulling it back into view. Freud concluded that the child's toleration of the repeated disappearance of his toy indicated his acceptance of separation from his mother.⁴⁹ This acknowledgement of mortality through play introduces children to the death drive, which contravenes both the concept of innocence and the promise of reproductive futurity.⁵⁰

Chapter Three examines the ways in which Cassatt and Morisot expose and arguably challenge this normalization. From the earliest days of a child's existence outside the womb, he or she is subjected to a series of rituals and quotidian conventions that aid in the formation of his or her gender as intelligibly male or female. Even simple acts, such as gazing into a mirror can enforce existing normative codes of conduct. On the other hand, they could encourage the child to question such codes. In conjunction with Butler's analysis of repetition, Cassatt's *Mother and Child (Mother Wearing a Sunflower on Her Dress)* (1905),⁵¹ is analyzed as an agent of disruption in the process of gender normalization by recording on a permanent medium a construct that is supposed

⁴⁸ Manet, *Growing up with the Impressionists*, 93.

⁴⁹ Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, trans. C.J.M. Hubback, 2nd ed. (London: International Psychoanalytical Press, 1922), 11–16.

⁵⁰ Jacques Lacan, *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis, 1959-1960*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. Dennis Porter (New York: Norton, 1992), 212; qtd. in Edelman, *No Future*, 25. This will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter Two

⁵¹ Mary Cassatt, *Mother and Child (Mother Wearing a Sunflower on Her Dress)*, 1905, Oil on canvas, 92.1x73.7cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

to be accepted as a biological truth.⁵² The inclusion and positioning of two mirrors within the picture plane allow the naked young girl to view her reflection in relation to that of her “femininely” attired mother, a factor that takes the subject matter into the realm of gender *formation* as Butler analyzes the concept. As her mother trains her in the art of gender performativity, the hand mirror emphasizes the child’s wide-eyed and closed-mouthed countenance that suggests a state of shock as she is conditioned to conform to a constructed norm.

Chapter Three also revisits the significance of the animal to shed light on its role in resistance to normalization and the fear of evolutionary regression during the age of Darwin. Cassatt’s *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* is analyzed as a picture of a child who, despite her “feminine” attire and grooming, rebels against her caregivers’ attempts to normalize her. Her slouched “unladylike” pose nearly mirrors the horizontal position of the sleeping dog on the chair across from her. As she directs her frowning countenance at the dog, a blue shadow that resembles a tear forms beneath her left eye. The two chairs, which separate in opposite directions, appear to share an origin beneath the border of the canvas. Taken together, these attributes suggest the girl’s state of mourning for the common origin that she and the dog shared in their evolutionary past. A return to this origin would delay, if not foreclose, her heteronormative teleology.

By the final decades of the nineteenth century, evolutionary biology had immersed itself in the larger culture of the English- and French-speaking worlds,⁵³ resulting in a variety of responses in the arts and sciences. In 1884, Morisot, who was

⁵² Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Tenth Anniversary Edition, (New York: Routledge, 1999), 178.

⁵³ Akira Lippit, *Electric Animal: Toward a Rhetoric of Wildlife* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 13–14.

familiar with the work of Darwin,⁵⁴ wrote to her sister, advising her that classic French literature was the best reading material for children. Immediately after a list of thematic recommendations, she adds, “We are all born monkeys before we are ourselves; therein lies the danger of bad examples.”⁵⁵ Her words seem to suggest a belief that reading the “wrong” books could trigger an evolutionary regression, as argued by Jean-Baptiste Lamarck earlier in the century.⁵⁶ Coincidentally, Julie identifies the book she holds in *Julie Manet Holding a Book* (1889)⁵⁷ as Jean Racine’s tragic play *Britannicus* (1670).⁵⁸ Although the conventional wisdom of the time considered the works of Racine too challenging for girls and women to comprehend,⁵⁹ Morisot’s preference of canonical French authors and possible belief that cerebral regression could result from the consumption of popular novels explains why she would approve of her eleven year-old daughter reading such “sophisticated” literature. Despite medical admonitions against advanced education⁶⁰ and the risk of Julie’s being labeled “unfeminine” for engaging in

⁵⁴ Morisot, undated letter to Edma Pontillon, c. 1873-1874, in *Berthe Morisot: The Correspondence*, 90.

⁵⁵ Morisot, undated letter to Edma Pontillon, c. August 1884, in *Berthe Morisot: The Correspondence*, 139.

⁵⁶ Jean-Baptiste-Pierre Antoine Lamarck, *Philosophie zoologique, ou exposition des considérations relative à l’histoire naturelle des animaux à la diversité de leur organisation et des facultés qu’ils on obtiennent; Aux causes physiques qui maintiennent en eux la vie et donnent aux mouvements qu’ils executent; Enfin, à celles qui produisent les unes le sentiment les autres l’intelligence de ceux qui en sont doués*, vol. 2 (Paris: Librairie F. Savy, 1873). Lamarck argues that bodily organs individuals fail to put to use will eventually deteriorate in terms of faculties deemed non-essential to the individual’s basic survival.

⁵⁷ Morisot, *Julie Manet Holding a Book*, 1889, oil on canvas, 65 x 54cm, private collection.

⁵⁸ Manet, *Growing up with the Impressionists*, 93.

⁵⁹ Colin Heywood, *Growing Up in France: From the Ancien Régime to the Third Republic* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 148.

⁶⁰ Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, “Puberty to Menopause: The Cycle of Femininity in Nineteenth-Century America,” *Feminist Studies* 1, no. 3/4 (1973): 62.

“masculine” pursuits,⁶¹ reversion to an animal state was a greater danger. An educated woman herself,⁶² Morisot knew from experience that advanced reading alone did not result in infertility. However, atavism would foreclose Julie’s prospects for marriage and motherhood. In other words, *Julie Manet Holding a Book* demonstrates the employment of queer literary choices to prevent a feared loss of humanity.

Chapter Four continues the discussion about normalization and its disruptions by examining the queer in depictions of children with their toys, specifically dolls and toy sailboats. A painting of Julie by Morisot (1884) and a pastel by Cassatt of her nephew Robert (c. 1882-83) initially seem normative due to the presence of a “gender-appropriate” toy in the possession of each child. However, the sitters’ facial expressions and body language tell a different story. Julie ignores her doll to stare toward the viewer. One arm tucks her doll in the crook of her elbow the other is straight, ending in what appears to be a clenched fist. In sum, these attributes defy the nurturing quality girls are expected to show toward their dolls. Robert, on the other hand, places a tentative grasp on his toy sailboat and displays a serious countenance. His lack of companionship and location in a domestic interior sharply differentiates from contemporaneous prints that depict groups of boys sailing their toy boats in public parks, suggesting a sense of competition.

Both portraits point to the difficult standards that girls and boys were expected to adopt in the 1880s and the frustration that each sitter’s pose suggests. “Ideal” girls modeled their appearances after the exaggerated femininity of the increasingly realistic

⁶¹ Garb, *Bodies of Modernity*, 34.

⁶² Morisot, undated letter to Edma Pontillon, c. 1873-1874, in *Berthe Morisot: The Correspondence*, 90.

dolls that were popular during the time, as Renoir depicts in many of his portraits. As girls continue to do today, many lashed out at their dolls to express their frustration toward this unachievable ideal.⁶³ Klein argues that children must engage in such “sadistic” acts toward their toys in order to develop and sharpen their “relation to the external world and to reality.”⁶⁴ However, Higonnet and Schirrmeister point to similarities between models’ often disengaged poses in late nineteenth-century fashion plates and those in Morisot’s oeuvres.⁶⁵ While Julie’s suggested lack of affection for her doll could stem from the status quo in French fashion plates, it departs from the sentimentalized image of girls and dolls as conveyed in the dominant culture.

Expectations for boys proved as difficult as they were for girls. In the wake of the Civil War in the United States and the Franco-Prussian War in Europe, American and French authorities perceived a “crisis” of masculinity that encouraged men and boys to increase their physical activity.⁶⁶ However, too much activity was feared to exhaust the

⁶³ Louise Collins et al., “We’re Not Barbie Girls: Tweens Transform a Feminine Icon,” *Feminist Formations* 24, no. 1 (2012): 104; Eugenia Gonzalez, “‘I Sometimes Think She Is a Spy on All My Actions’: Dolls, Girls, and Disciplinary Surveillance in the Nineteenth-Century Doll Tale,” *Children’s Literature* 39, no. 1 (2011): 34–35.

⁶⁴ Melanie Klein, “The Importance of Symbol Formation in the Development of the Ego,” in *The Selected Melanie Klein*, ed. Juliet Mitchell (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 98.

⁶⁵ Higonnet, *Berthe Morisot’s Images of Women*, 84–122; Schirrmeister, “La Dernière Mode.”

⁶⁶ Christopher E. Forth, “Surviving Our Paradoxes?: Masculinity, Modernity, and the Body,” *Culture, Society, and Masculinity* 1, no. 1 (2009): 6–32; David Morgan, “Renegotiating Masculinity after the Civil War: Absent Fathers and Women with Beards: Religion and Gender in Popular Imagery of the Nineteenth Century,” in *American Visual Cultures*, ed. David Holloway and John Beck (New York: Continuum, 2005), 39–47; Julia Grant, “A ‘Real Boy’ and Not a Sissy: Gender, Childhood, and Masculinity, 1890–1940,” *Journal of Social History* 37, no. 4 (July 1, 2004): 829–51; Garb, *Bodies of Modernity*, 54–79.

male body, putting it at risk for “feminization.”⁶⁷ By the late nineteenth- and early twentieth centuries, child-rearing manuals warned parents about the “boy problem,” which included hyperactive or rambunctious behavior.⁶⁸ The successful normative male was to maintain a calm, unemotional demeanor.⁶⁹ For a nine- or ten year-old boy like Robert Kelso Cassatt—who greatly enjoyed physical activity, as noted in family correspondence,⁷⁰ but had also reached an age that required the mature behavior expected of a future business executive—such contradictory standards were likely confusing. In his aunt’s portrait, he initially appears unemotional yet simultaneously seems to frown. Perhaps his countenance is an attempt to appear introspective, but such behavior would conflict with a toy that signifies aggression and competition.⁷¹ Furthermore, his location in a domestic (“feminine”) setting diverges from the public (“masculine”) locations for which his toy was intended. In a culture that demanded rigid distinctions between “masculine” and “feminine,” Cassatt’s high degree of nuance was queer.

⁶⁷ Robert A Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 67.

⁶⁸ Ernest Thompson Seton, *Boy Scouts of America: A Handbook of Woodcraft, Scouting, and Life-Craft* (New York: Doubleday, 1910), xi–xii; cited in Salazar, *Bodies of Reform*, 77–78.

⁶⁹ Samuel Smiles, *Character*, 2nd ed. (London: John Murray, 1876), 158–187.

⁷⁰ Katherine Kelso Johnston Cassatt, letter to Katharine Cassatt, January 21, 1885, reprinted in Mathews, *Cassatt and Her Circle: Selected Letters*, ed. Nancy Mowll Mathews (New York: Abbeville Press, 1984), 187. In this letter, Mrs. Cassatt comments on Robert’s “wriggling about like a flea” with her granddaughter. See also Alexander Cassatt, letter to Lois Cassatt, December 1884–January 1885, qtd. in Jennifer A. Thompson, *Masterpieces from the Philadelphia Museum of Art: Impressionism and Modern Art* (Tokyo: The Yomiuri Shimbun, 2007), 194, in which the writer mentions a portrait sitting with Robert to his wife, pointing out that the younger Cassatt will not have to sit still for too long.

⁷¹ Leslie Daiken, *Children’s Toys throughout the Ages*. (New York: Praeger, 1953), 94.

Prints produced during the latter half of the nineteenth century inform us that toy sailboats were marketed to boys. In fashion plates and general illustrations, boys hold or actively play with toy sailboats. If girls accompany the boys, they play the roles of spectators. One exception to this rule is a plate from *Peterson's Magazine*, in which a toy sailboat floats between one two boys who face the viewer and one girl who turns her back to the viewer and faces the boys. Because the boat appears to lack a string and because the girl's right hand is out of view, the question of who controls the boat is left unanswered.

Morisot employs a similar technique in paintings of Julie sailing her toy boat. Unlike the majority of contemporaneous prints depicting toy sailboats, Morisot's paintings are set in the private family garden, which protects Julie from the prying eyes of the public. Unlike the manicured bourgeois gardens that appear in gardens in fashion plates,⁷² the Morisot-Manet family garden maintains a sense of "wildness" in the form of erratically hanging tree branches or tall blades of grass. This "uncontrolled" state of nature recalls the Alison Syme's scholarship on the presence of "child pollinators" in garden scenes painted by John Singer Sargent.⁷³ Julie's possible role as "child pollinator," although technically queer, informs the viewer that her choice of toy will not affect her future fertility. For conventional wisdom this message was a contradiction in terms. As with the other artworks analyzed in this dissertation, Morisot blurs the

⁷² Bohleke, "Americanizing French Fashion Plates," 123–124. Bohleke equates the "controlled" state of bourgeois gardens with the "controlled" sexuality of the women who inhabit them.

⁷³ Alison Syme, *A Touch of Blossom: John Singer Sargent and the Queer Flora of Fin-de-Siècle Art* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), 144–193. Syme focuses on the connection between thriving vegetation and the touch or nurturing that children provide.

normatively rigid line between masculinity and femininity, heterosexuality and homosexuality, and fertility and sterility as her contemporaries perceived them.

CHAPTER ONE:

QUEER PATRIARCHY

As the bourgeoisie grew into a stratified class, the wealthier ranks distinguished themselves from the lower ranks by, among other lifestyle choices, gendering the two major spheres of existence. Men, as the “breadwinners” and “heads of households,” occupied the public sphere in positions of power, such as bankers and factory owners, while women remained in the private sphere, assuming the responsibilities of caring for children and maintaining order within the household or delegating those duties to household staff. In the second half of the nineteenth century, according to the popular narrative, the private sphere became a refuge for the man of the house after a grueling day at his place of employment, while the children and the lady of the house happily basked in the shelter and luxuries the patriarch’s earnings provided.⁷⁴ In short, the bourgeois⁷⁵ family was a vision of the male-dominated progress of the Industrial

⁷⁴ John P. McKay, et al., *Understanding Western Society: A History*, combined volume (New York: Macmillan Higher Education, 2014), 692.

⁷⁵ The middle classes of France and the United States were stratified generally into the levels of less affluent *petit bourgeois* (such as shopkeepers, artisans, and noncommissioned members of the military) and the wealthier *haut bourgeois* (such as business executives, self-made industrialists, and high-ranking military officers), who controlled the means of production and delegated domestic tasks to household staff.

Revolution. Late nineteenth-century French and American visual culture largely supports this paradigm. For example, painted and photographed family portraits depict dominant patriarchs and well-behaved children, and fashion plates and urban genre paintings depict successful young men supporting their young wives' hands in the crooks of their arms, sometimes overseeing their children happily engaging in play.

Such was the idealized image of the upper middle-class family, but, as the title of this chapter suggests, it was not the reality. Morisot and her husband experienced a relative sense of equality, a situation in which normative men would have felt emasculated. Cassatt's brother Alexander ("Aleck"), a successful railroad executive, resigned his vice presidency in favor of less demanding duties and actively made efforts to strengthen ties with his nuclear and extended families. As deviations from the norm in which the domestic sphere was a "feminine" realm, such patriarchs were, by definition, queer.⁷⁶ Late nineteenth-century Western culture depended on the classification of people, animals, and things into rigid categories. Any indication of ambiguity that would

Aspiring white-collar professionals in such positions as middle management occupied the ranks between the two poles. See Patrick J. Harrigan, *Mobility, Elites, and Education in French Society of the Second Empire* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1980), 1–13. Despite the historical scope of the book, the introduction provides a working overview of middle-class composition in nineteenth-century France.

⁷⁶ Normativity, especially nineteenth-century normativity, is governed by strict, non-porous boundaries pertaining to gender, sexuality, and reproductive potential. Characteristics that cross the binary (such as men who do not hold paid employment in the public sphere or children who play with toys that are not "gender-appropriate") are considered "queer." For more information, see Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004); and Kathryn Bond Stockton, *The Queer Child: Growing Sideways in the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009).

transcend two or more categories was greeted with suspicion.⁷⁷ Using contemporaneous visual culture and literature, this chapter will demonstrate the queerness of one of Morisot's portraits of her husband and daughter, as well as Cassatt's portrait of her brother and his younger son in relation to the concept of normative masculinity during the Third Republic in France and the Gilded Age of the United States, when both nations experienced a perceived "crisis" of masculinity.

Normative Masculinity

As families across the bourgeoisie enjoyed increased affluence over the course of the century, they were able to take advantage of leisure time. However, as Carol E. Harrison explains, although leisure time signified success, it also according to mainstream beliefs put men at risk for filling that time with immoral activities.⁷⁸ Negative opinions regarding men's idleness did not stray far from the world of the Impressionist painters. Degas's aunt Laura Bellelli complained to her nephew about her husband's lack of a "serious occupation to make him less boring to himself."⁷⁹ Although she does not overtly connect idleness and immorality, Linda Nochlin refers to Bellelli as a survivor of "an act that has come to be defined as marital rape" when alluding to Bellelli's advanced

⁷⁷ Martha Lucy, "Reading the Animal in Degas's Young Spartans," *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 2, no. 2 (Spring 2003), <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/index.php/spring03index>.

⁷⁸ Carol E. Harrison, *The Bourgeois Citizen in Nineteenth-Century France: Gender, Sociability, and the Uses of Emulation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 88.

⁷⁹ Jean Sutherland Boggs et al., eds., *Degas*, exh. cat. (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1988), 81–82; quoted in Linda Nochlin, *Representing Women* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999), 156.

pregnancy in Degas's portrait of the family begun in 1858.⁸⁰ While the marriage was "loveless,"⁸¹ giving Bellelli plenty of reasons to dislike her husband, her illumination of his lack of gainful employment in her list of complaints speaks to the disdain with which male idleness was viewed in late nineteenth-century Europe.

Contemporary writers, such as Émile Zola, also adhered to the worldview of the bourgeois work ethic by portraying professional and working men as heroes and casting lazy, unemployed men as villains. For example, Zola's novel *La Joie de vivre* (1884) portrays the gainfully employed and attentive Doctor Cazenove as the novel's hero while placing the chronically unemployed and apathetic Lazare Chanteau in the role of the immoral villain. Retired after thirty years of service in the navy, Cazenove could enjoy a sedentary existence in a house he inherited but instead opts to care for the Chanteau family and the (mostly impoverished) residents of the town of Bonneville. His concern for the health of his patients and the general well being of his friends and acquaintances places Cazenove in the heteronormatively masculine roles of provider (of needed medical services) and protector (from illness and injury). Chanteau, on the other hand, shuns productivity and recklessly depletes the inheritance of his orphaned distant cousin. After marrying a wealthy banker's daughter, his idleness continues and contributes to his unhappy relationship with his wife.⁸² In short, the true provider and protector leads an industrious life, while his idle and avaricious counterpart brings only misery to those around him.

⁸⁰ Edgar Degas, *Family Portrait (The Bellelli Family)*, 1858-67, oil on canvas, 200 x 250cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

⁸¹ Nochlin, *Representing Women*, 156.

⁸² Émile Zola, *La joie de vivre* (Paris: G. Charpentier, 1884), <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k113129n>. Accessed September 11, 2015.

This necessity for bourgeois men to maintain gainful employment is rooted in the strict classificatory divisions that French culture had drawn between men and women over a century earlier. From the final decades of the *ancien régime* for the duration of the Third Republic, political and medical discourse used reason and science to gender the spheres as masculine and feminine, respectively.⁸³ Biomedical texts argued that the uterus required significant amounts of energy to function, drawing energy away from the brain and the muscular system and causing physical, psychological, and intellectual difference from men.⁸⁴ As a result, conventional biomedical wisdom, relying on established authorities such as Pierre Roussel, argued that women must preserve their energy for healthy fetal development and properly executed maternal duties.⁸⁵ Perhaps this is why, as Harrison explains, idleness was perceived as a “feminine” characteristic.⁸⁶ If biology required women to preserve their energy, they would have to lead idle lifestyles for the sake of their descendents.

⁸³ Robert A Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 47–52; Charles Sowerwine, “Revisiting the Sexual Contract: Women’s Citizenship and Republicanism in France, 1789-1944,” in *Confronting Modernity in Fin-de-Siècle France: Bodies, Minds and Gender*, ed. Christopher E. Forth and Elinor A. Accampo (Basingstoke [England]: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 19–42.

⁸⁴ Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France*, 51–52. I avoid the word “inferior” because political discourse framed women’s duties toward the hearth (*foyer*) not as lesser than men’s public responsibilities but as a form of equality. While men, as active citizens were tasked with providing food, clothing, and shelter for their families, women held the responsibility of continuing republican and bourgeois values into the next generation. See Sowerwine, “Revisiting the Sexual Contract,” 30.

⁸⁵ Pierre Roussel, *Système physique et moral de la femme suivi d’un fragment du système physique et moral de l’homme et d’un essai sur la sensibilité*, 7th ed. (Paris: Caille et Ravier, 1820), 154–161.

⁸⁶ Harrison, “Citizens and Scientists: Toward a Gendered History of Scientific Practice in Post-Revolutionary France,” *Gender & History* 13, no. 3 (November 1, 2001): 455, doi:10.1111/1468-0424.00239.

Men, on the other hand, faced no such biological restrictions and, therefore, had no reason to reserve their physical and mental energy. In fact, as Christopher E. Forth notes, since the eighteenth century, idleness in men had figured among the numerous vices associated with elitism, effeminacy, and sodomy.⁸⁷ Consequently, sociocultural norms required men, as providers to their families and the standard bearers of their class, to mark themselves as definitively masculine by occupying their time with gainful employment and acceptable leisure activities, such as physical fitness and scientific pursuits. To avoid being labeled “feminine,” many bourgeois men avoided leisure activities that included music and visual art.⁸⁸

According to Forth, modernity and civilization triggered a “crisis” in masculinity in the Western world. The dominant scholarship conceptualizes the realms of culture and civilization—the world of business, critical ideas, and politics—as the domain of men. On the other hand, nature—with its ties to domesticity, nurturing, and reproduction—is characterized as the domain of women. Paradoxically, however, historical developments that ended the age of the nomadic hunter-gatherer in a state of nature and brought about more sedentary, sheltered ways of life set in relatively urban environments and governed by laws and decorum (that is, civilization) have elicited “recurring complaints about the softer, more polite and seemingly more ‘effeminate’ lifestyles.” As intellectual development took precedence over physical activities, it was feared, the resulting physical weakness would feminize men, making them vulnerable and susceptible to

⁸⁷ Christopher E. Forth, “Manhood Incorporated: Diet and the Embodiment of ‘Civilized’ Masculinity,” *Men and Masculinities* 11, no. 5 (2009): 490.

⁸⁸ Harrison, “Citizens and Scientists,” 455.

sexual “transgressions,” such as masturbation and same-sex encounters.⁸⁹ In an era in which France was reeling from its “emasculating” defeat in the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71), “suffering” from a decline in births,⁹⁰ any behavior that threatened one’s reproductive potential endangered not only one’s reputation. It endangered the future of the country.

With the future of the French nation in peril, everyone had to contribute his or her efforts to the cause, and the bedroom constituted only one front. The nation’s future also depended on the “proper” performance of gender in public, as well. Tamar Garb observes that late nineteenth-century European norms dictated that male bodies and female bodies strictly conform to their prescribed genders. Visible, intelligible attributes marked individuals as either masculine or feminine. Masculine features included “muscles that were rounded and swollen, and skin that was rough, textured and covered with hair.” Feminine features, on the other hand, included “minute waistlines, bejewelled [*sic*] bodies, unblemished complexions and elaborate coiffures.” The appearance of any of these characteristics on the “wrong” sex was considered a crime against nature. Garb points out that painted and photographed individuals sometimes overperform their prescribed genders out of fear of underperforming or transgressing “perfectly policed boundaries” of gender.⁹¹ Whether one consciously sat for a portrait or unknowingly became a figure in a *flâneur*’s genre painting, his or her adherence to bodily and sartorial

⁸⁹ Forth, “Surviving Our Paradoxes?: Masculinity, Modernity, and the Body,” *Culture, Society, and Masculinity* 1, no. 1 (2009): 11–12.

⁹⁰ Tamar Garb, *Bodies of Modernity: Figure and Flesh in Fin-de-Siècle France* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 34.

⁹¹ Garb, *Bodies of Modernity*, 11-12.

gender norms were recorded on a permanent medium and potentially made available for large audiences to scrutinize and judge.

That individuals had a reason to conform is obvious, but is there a reason for such strict norms in the first place? Perhaps Forth's theory of civilization as a "feminizing" force might answer this question. In both the United States and in Europe, civilization seemed to assume the form of women themselves. Mythically represented as occupying a realm of moral superiority throughout the late nineteenth-century Western world, cultural authorities simultaneously praised women as the great civilizers of men and condemned them as threats to men's independence and the power they exercised in society.⁹² The French, in particular, were almost certainly aware of the reputation they bore in the English-speaking world for their supposedly higher level of "manners, culture, and education," which inevitably branded them as "effeminate,"⁹³ and put them at an additional disadvantage in the realm of heteronormative masculinity. While gender performativity thrived in the dominant culture, the "feminizing" forces of gentility, intellect, and lack of physical exertion still threatened to undermine masculinity and destroy gender difference.

Given the level of concern placed on men's health in an increasingly urbanized and industrialized world, an examination of the health issues the adult male sitters in Morisot's and Cassatt's portraits experienced will shed light on these destabilized notions of masculinity. For much of the final decade of Manet's life, he suffered from chronic

⁹² Forth, "Surviving Our Paradoxes?," 19; Nina Baym, "Melodramas of Beset Manhood: How Theories of American Fiction Exclude Women Authors," in *Criticism: Major Statements*, ed. Charles Kaplan and William Davis Anderson (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 586–602.

⁹³ Forth, "Surviving Our Paradoxes?," 17.

poor health, which resulted in periods of invalidism, necessitating extensive rest within the domestic sphere, including enclosed gardens. While his condition did not preclude his ability to become a father or assume a significant role in his daughter's upbringing, it did affect his employment status and the odds of his living to see his daughter become an adult. Long periods of illness would end his life in 1892, when his daughter was only thirteen years old.⁹⁴

Although scholars do not speculate as to which illness affected him, Higonet provides information that sheds light on the severity of Manet's condition. His health problems became irreversible in 1886, prompting him to retreat almost permanently to the private sphere after helping to organize the Impressionist exhibition. The following year, Morisot wrote to an unnamed friend that Manet had a persistent cough that kept him confined to his room for much of the time and left him increasingly dependent on his wife. In an effort to lift his spirits and distract herself from the bleak outcome that awaited him, Morisot began hosting weekly "soirées," which drew the likes of Degas, Mallarmé, and other avant-garde elites in her social circle.⁹⁵ The role of caregiver to an ailing family member was a nurturing, and thus normative, role for a woman to assume. Furthermore, while the actual cause of Manet's persistent cough remains a matter of speculation, tuberculosis—the disease most associated with coughing—was, according to David S. Barnes, "[France's] leading cause of death" in the nineteenth century.⁹⁶ Regardless of what weakened and eventually killed Manet, the ubiquity of tuberculosis in

⁹⁴ Rosalind de Boland. Roberts and Jane Roberts, "Introduction," in *Growing up with the Impressionists: The Diary of Julie Manet*, trans. Rosalind de Boland Roberts, and Jane Roberts (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1987), 12, 20–21.

⁹⁵ Anne Higonet, *Berthe Morisot* (New York: Harper and Row, 1990), 181.

⁹⁶ David S. Barnes, *The Making of a Social Disease: Tuberculosis in Nineteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 2.

nineteenth-century France would not have challenged the normative masculinity of a man with a chronic cough. However, returning to Forth's analysis on the concerns of civilization's effects on masculinity, a man's weakened condition—especially one that rendered him dependent upon a woman—threatened his status as a pillar of strength and power.

On the other hand, secondary biographical information about Aleck Cassatt reveals nothing regarding his health. However, family correspondence makes brief, nonspecific allusions to his physical well-being. Cassatt and her father allude to Aleck's silence on matters of his health, interpreting his lack of disclosure as evidence of good health.⁹⁷ More specifically, the following extract from Cassatt's letter to her sister-in-law is of particular interest: "Aleck is certainly better[;] his 'douches' did him good [*sic*]. I do hope he will go on with them, [and] that he will continue to take moderate exercise."⁹⁸ As with Manet, we can only speculate as to the exact reason for Aleck's receiving these treatments. However, exercise and hydrotherapy were commonly prescribed treatments for neurasthenia,⁹⁹ a physical and psychological condition that affected individuals in "mentally demanding occupations." Symptoms included "headaches, nosebleeds, lack of concentration, and a general state of weakness." Once again, Forth's paradox enters the proverbial picture. Although social norms would seem to cast neurasthenia in a positive

⁹⁷ Mary Cassatt, letter to Alexander Cassatt, September 21, 1885, rpt. in *Cassatt and Her Circle: Selected Letters*, ed. Nancy Mowll Mathews (New York: Abbeville Press, 1984), 197; Robert Cassatt (Sr.), letter to Alexander Cassatt, July 28, 1891, rpt. in *Cassatt and Her Circle*, 223.

⁹⁸ Cassatt, letter to Lois Buchanan Cassatt, January 28, 1885, rpt. in *Cassatt and Her Circle*, 188.

⁹⁹ Joseph H. Pratt, "Hydrotherapeutic Prescriptions," *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* 150, no. 11 (March 17, 1904): 289–290; Wharton Sinkler, "Prognosis and Treatment of the Traumatic Neuroses," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 35, no. 39 (September 22, 1900): 735.

light due to its roots in diligent work,¹⁰⁰ poor health and physical weakness still contravened normative masculinity.

While evidence of porous gender boundaries were considered socially unacceptable, the performance of heteronormative masculinity shunned “hypermasculinity” as much as it did evidence of effeminacy. Contemporary medical literature counts “abundant body hair,” a “lean” bodily figure, insatiable sexual desire, and priapism as hypermasculine characteristics.¹⁰¹ Men possessing such characteristics were at an increased risk of “excessive expenditure[s] of sexual energy,” which could bring about potentially feminizing states of exhaustion. While late nineteenth-century physicians did not believe that men could become biologically female, they did argue that exhaustion endangered the existence of important characteristics of sexual difference.¹⁰² In other words, the maintenance of heteronormative masculinity required a skillful balancing act. Men who immersed themselves too much in sedentary intellectual pursuits risked weakness and feminization. On the other hand, men who exhibited “hypermasculine” traits and spent too much energy risked exhaustion, which also, according to conventional wisdom, had feminizing effects.

The importance of adherence to heteronormative gender roles might explain the scarcity of depictions of fathers and their children—especially fathers interacting with

¹⁰⁰ Thomas Winter, “Gilded Age,” ed. Carroll Bret E. Carroll, *American Masculinities: A Historical Encyclopedia* (New York: Moschovitis Group, 2003), 190.

¹⁰¹ G. Bouchereau, “Satyriasis,” *Dictionnaire encyclopédique des sciences médicales*, 3 (Paris: Masson, 1879), 67; Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France*, 67.

¹⁰² J. Christian and Antoine Ritti, “Paralyse générale,” in *Dictionnaire encyclopédique des sciences médicales*, 2 (Paris: Masson, 1884), 740–741, 754, cited in Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France*, 67.

their children—in the visual culture of the Third Republic and the Gilded Age.¹⁰³

However, it should be noted that, the presence and depiction of men within the domestic realm did not necessarily clash with the status quo. Nye points out that established norms “permitt[ed] men to roam over both [spheres].”¹⁰⁴ The key issue is the interaction, or lack thereof, between fathers and children. In most representations of fathers and children, the groups either assume a marginalized role relative to the emphasized subject matter,¹⁰⁵ or the fathers’ facial expressions or body language suggest physical or psychological detachment from their children.¹⁰⁶ Morisot and Cassatt deviate from this norm in their respective portraits of Eugène and Julie Manet and Alexander and Robert Cassatt, with the former depicting active engagement between father and daughter and the latter depicting a mutual uneasiness between father and son.

The Attentive Domestic Patriarch of the Third Republic

Morisot’s marriage to Eugène Manet defied the gendered standards of the late nineteenth-century Western world. Although her male contemporaries and later biographers mention her physical attractiveness and conformity to standards of “ladylike” decorum, she remained unmarried until the age of thirty-three. While the existing scholarship appears to overlook the average age for marriage among French women

¹⁰³ Greg M Thomas, *Impressionist Children: Childhood, Family, and Modern Identity in French Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 104.

¹⁰⁴ Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France*, 47.

¹⁰⁵ Such subordination is found in Georges Seurat’s *Sunday on La Grande Jatte*, 1884-86, oil on canvas, 207.5 x 308.1cm, Art Institute of Chicago.

¹⁰⁶ Edgar Degas represents his friend Vicomte Ludovic Lepic in a state of apparent disengagement from his daughters in *Vicomte Lepic and His Daughters*, c. 1871, oil on canvas, 66.5 x 81cm, E.G. Bührle Collection, Zurich. Degas’s painting will be addressed in relation to Morisot’s and Cassatt’s portraits later in this chapter.

during the Third Republic, Beth Genné points out that thirty-three was a “relatively late age” for an upper middle-class woman to marry in 1874.¹⁰⁷ In other words, the dominant worldview among the bourgeoisie could have assigned Morisot to a lifetime of spinsterhood. By June 1871, the suppression of the Paris Commune allowed Morisot’s mother to shift her attention to finding a husband for her now thirty-year-old daughter. Madame Morisot expressed her “anxiety” over the situation, lamenting her daughter’s high standards for potential mates and wishing that she “had all this turmoil of feeling and phantasy behind her” because “in a few more years...her youth [would] fade,” further limiting her prospects. By this time, Morisot and Manet had expressed interest in each other.¹⁰⁸ Higonet points out that “talent, ... accomplishments, [and] intelligence” usually rendered women unmarriageable, that “marriage to a professional woman, especially one who claimed to have artistic gifts, doomed a man to neglect and mockery.” However, the very attributes that would have driven other suitors away from Morisot drew Manet to her.¹⁰⁹ Madame Morisot was aware of this attraction but disapproved of it, opining that Manet was “crazy” and that a marriage to someone of his left-wing political zeal would bring “no assurance for happiness in life.”¹¹⁰

Despite Manet’s socioeconomic standing, Madame Morisot also disapproved of his employment status. The majority of existing scholarship and primary sources claim that Manet did not hold paid employment during his marriage, although Greg Thomas

¹⁰⁷ Beth Genné, “Two Self-Portraits by Berthe Morisot,” in *Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Art*, ed. Mary M. Gedo, vol. 2 (New York: Routledge, 1986), 149.

¹⁰⁸ Marie-Joséphine Morisot, letter to Edma Pontillon (née Morisot), June 22, 1871, in *Berthe Morisot: The Correspondence with Her Family and Friends*, edited by Denis Rouart (Mt. Kisco, NY: Moyer Bell, 1987), 75-76.

¹⁰⁹ Higonet, *Berthe Morisot*, 116.

¹¹⁰ Marie-Joséphine Morisot, letter to Edma Pontillon, June 22, 1871, in *Berthe Morisot: The Correspondence*, 75-76.

mentions a period of employment in the French Finance Ministry beginning in 1880 or 1881.¹¹¹ Five months after the wedding, Madame Morisot expressed her desire for Manet to take a position as a tax collector in Grenoble that paid a salary of 17,000 francs, only to receive word that “the position had just been abolished.”¹¹² One reason for his lack of a career was his family fortune, which allowed him and his brothers to abstain from paid employment if they chose. However, the absence of long-term paid employment was also due to circumstances beyond his control, namely his chronic poor health.

After he and Morisot married in 1874 until his health problems largely confined him to the home in 1886, Manet’s primary “job” was supporting and promoting his wife’s career.¹¹³ Correspondence between the spouses reveals his curatorial decisions pertaining to Morisot’s work in the hangings of exhibitions. For the Seventh Impressionist Exhibition (1882), Manet decided to exhibit, among other works, Morisot’s painting of him and Julie “playing with her houses” and had “deposited” the paintings for framing, a process that he would oversee. However, upon mentioning his favorable opinion of a painting of Julie’s nanny sewing, he asks Morisot, “Shall I enter it?”¹¹⁴ In other words, Manet’s decisions as to which of his wife’s artworks to enter the exhibition

¹¹¹ Thomas, *Impressionist Children*, 101. Thomas does not provide a citation for this claim, and my own efforts to find supporting evidence in primary and secondary sources have proved fruitless.

¹¹² Marie-Joséphine Morisot, letter to Berthe Morisot, May 16, 1875, in *Berthe Morisot: The Correspondence*, 97-98.

¹¹³ Nancy Locke, *Manet and the Family Romance* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 55.

¹¹⁴ Eugène Manet, letter to Berthe Morisot, March 1, 1882, in *Berthe Morisot: The Correspondence with Her Family and Friends*, ed. Denis Rouart, trans. Betty W. Hubbard (Mt. Kisco, NY: Moyer Bell, 1987), 119. Until recently, scholars largely agreed that the painting described was *Eugène Manet and His Daughter in the Garden at Bougival* (1881), discussed later in this chapter for its significance as a non-normative depiction of bourgeois fatherhood.

would have given the impression that the final decision of what the public should see lay with him. Although his asking her permission to display one painting suggests that he did not make his final decisions unilaterally, his public role as curator, preparator, and (on the surface) one-man jury seems to have endowed him with a normative sense of power and enabled him to avoid accusations of idleness and effeminacy.

From the birth of his daughter Julie in November 1878 until his death, Manet also defied heteronormative masculinity by taking an active role in Julie's upbringing. Two years after her father's death, Julie noted in her diary how much she still missed him and needed him in her life.¹¹⁵ The historical context of upper middle-class families in nineteenth-century France informs us that the bond Julie shared with her father was rare for its time. On one level, fathers and daughters commonly expressed a mutual sense of familial love, but emotions only comprise part of the story. Colin Heywood proposes that overt fondness could have been due to normative girls' compliance with paternal authority (as opposed to boys' comparatively "turbulent" behavior) and potential roles as caregivers for their elderly fathers. In return for this obedience and loyalty, the normative father, unconcerned with the domestic education that his wife would provide, merely had to "preserv[e] his daughter's virginity and secur[e] a good marriage for her." Despite the advice of Gustave Droz, who encouraged fathers to foster deep bonds with their children,¹¹⁶ most men remained their daughters' providers and keepers. Otherwise, upper

¹¹⁵ Julie Manet, *Growing up with the Impressionists: The Diary of Julie Manet*, ed. Roslind de Boland Roberts and Jane Roberts, trans. Rosalind de Boland Roberts and Jane Roberts (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1987), 46.

¹¹⁶ Gustave Droz, *Monsieur, madame et bébé*, 116th ed. (Paris: Victor-Havard, 1882), cited in Colin Heywood, *Growing Up in France: From the Ancien Régime to the Third Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 146.

middle-class patriarchs, occupied at their places of employment for most of their waking hours, merely played “peripheral” roles in their daughters’ lives.¹¹⁷

Although Droz’s book was already in its one hundred sixteenth edition less than twenty years after its initial publication, contextual evidence demonstrates that most bourgeois fathers were not ready to form friendships with their children. Most portraits of fathers and children produced by Edgar Degas alone demonstrate varying degrees of psychological distance between the two groups.¹¹⁸ Judith Surkis explains that autonomy, which relied on restrained “passions, instincts, and desires,” defined “masculinity itself” during the Third Republic.¹¹⁹ Conversely, Charles Sowerwine points out that “affectivity” numbered among the characteristics “identified as the essence of femininity.”¹²⁰ In a culture governed by tightly bound categories, men who displayed “feminine” characteristics risked having their masculinity questioned. On this level alone, Manet’s relationship with Julie was a queer one. In contrast to the normative bourgeois father, Manet, primarily unemployed, spent more time within the domestic sphere, assuming active and affective parental duties commonly left to wives and domestic staff.

¹¹⁷ Heywood, *Growing Up in France*, 148-149.

¹¹⁸ Examples of overt distance, if not obliviousness, include *The Bellelli Family*, c. 1858-60, oil on canvas, 200 x 250cm, Musée d’Orsay, Paris and *Place de la Concorde*, 1875, oil on canvas, 78.4 x 117.5cm, Hermitage, St. Petersburg. Fathers or paternal figures exist in a state of partial or semi-acknowledgement of their children or charges in *Henri Rouart and His Daughter Hélène*, 1871-77, oil on canvas, 63.5 x 74.9cm, private collection, New York; *Henri Degas and His Niece Lucie Degas*, c. 1876, oil on canvas, 99.8 x 119.9cm, Art Institute of Chicago; and *Vicomte Lepic and His Daughters*, c. 1871, oil on canvas, 66.5 x 81cm, E.G. Bührle Collection, Zurich. The last portrait in this list is discussed in detail later in this chapter.

¹¹⁹ Judith Surkis, *Sexing the Citizen: Morality and Masculinity in France, 1870-1920* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), 2, 5.

¹²⁰ Sowerwine, “Revisiting the Sexual Contract,” 33.

We can see evidence of a close father-daughter bond in Morisot's portrait *Eugène Manet and His Daughter in the Garden at Bougival* (1881) (fig. 1).¹²¹ On the surface, this painting highlights Manet's multifaceted role as father, educator, and friend. Close inspection reveals Morisot's manipulation of formal elements, which challenge socio-cultural norms regarding men's roles in the domestic sphere. Here, Manet, seated on a garden bench, has allowed Julie to place a toy in his lap. While he tucks his right hand in his jacket pocket, his left hand appears to disappear into the edge of Julie's sleeve as if he is holding her hand. Not immediately noticeable but still visible is the point at which the dark fabric of Manet's trouser leg begins to blend with Julie's pink dress (fig. 2). Cassatt uses this technique in several of her portraits of mothers with young children, such as *Emmie and Her Child* (c. 1888-93) (fig. 3).¹²² Griselda Pollock describes the "loosely brushed" quality of the child's right foot as "a moment of aesthetic becoming that one is tempted to read for its association with the child's own incomplete emergence as a separate person."¹²³

Such an "incomplete emergence" might recall the phases in Lacanian or Winnicottian psychoanalysis in which the infant, dependent on its mother yet seemingly omnipotent in its ability to attain its desires for nourishment and warmth by crying, can only conceive of the mother's body as part of itself. The child perceives the breast as something that appears at the moment of the initial pangs of hunger, yet this level of wish fulfillment is merely temporary. Eventually, the mother must begin to wean the infant,

¹²¹ Morisot, *Eugène Manet and His Daughter in the Garden at Bougival*, 1881, oil on canvas, 73 x 92cm, private collection.

¹²² Cassatt, *Emmie and Her Child*, 1889, oil on canvas, 89.8 x 64.4cm, Wichita Art Museum.

¹²³ Griselda Pollock, *Mary Cassatt: Painter of Modern Women* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 199.

initiating the child's sense of subjectivity that will culminate in the mirror stage.¹²⁴

However, both psychoanalysts associated this stage with the nursing mother. How might the theories of Lacan and Winnicott be reconciled with the child's partial emergence from the *father*, as Morisot depicts? Could Morisot's own poor health, which rendered her too sickly to nurse Julie, play a role in this seeming reversal of normative parental duties? Could her illness have strengthened her husband's nurturing capabilities? Scholars can only speculate on answers to these questions. However, the apparent merging of father and daughter is a radical departure from the norm of an era that cast women as innately nurturing and desirous of carrying, bearing, and rearing children. In other words, Morisot has placed her husband in a normative maternal role while, she, as the spouse with the career, assumes the normative paternal role, if a frail one.

Although this scene was unique for the time, Morisot further challenges established norms by placing her husband and daughter in a garden rich with blooming vegetation.¹²⁵ Viewed as an extension of the private sphere, bourgeois gardens were typically enclosed and separated from the public sphere.¹²⁶ This division manifests itself in the fence and vine that divide the Morisot-Manet garden from the houses in the background. With the exception of the bench, only natural elements like flora and soil

¹²⁴ Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," in *Ecrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan, second edition of *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, eds. Vincent B. Leitch et. al. (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2010), 1164; and D.W. Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (New York: Basic Books, 1971), 11.

¹²⁵ Alison Syme, *A Touch of Blossom: John Singer Sargent and the Queer Flora of Fin-de-Siècle Art* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), 144–193. Syme draws a link between children and flora in the work of John Singer Sargent, placing the children in the roles of metaphorical pollinators as they engage with real or symbolic plant life. This topic will be revisited in Chapter Four.

¹²⁶ Pollock, "Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity," in *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and the History of Art* (London: Routledge, 1988), 56.

surround Julie and her father. Just as the fence divides the garden from the outside world, the vibrant vegetation divides father and daughter from the garden's outer boundary. This tactic dissolves the gendered binary opposition between nature and culture and presents Manet's roles as an emotionally supportive husband and nurturing father as natural lifestyle choices. It is as if, despite her moderate to conservative views regarding the separation of the spheres,¹²⁷ she challenges the status quo to accept the nurturing father as a natural role for men to assume.

Part of Manet's role as nurturer included his involvement in his daughter's playtime, as Morisot conveys through Julie's playing with a toy balanced on her father's lap. Most scholars identify the toy as a village, citing a letter Manet wrote to Morisot¹²⁸ and an entry in Julie's diary.¹²⁹ The most relevant alternative identification is a board game.¹³⁰ If the toy is a board game, his role is more active, as the second player. Julie, arguably, moves her game piece while Manet observes and contemplates his countermove. Such a scenario suggests a father who takes his daughter's intellect seriously, a logical conclusion when considering that he and Morisot never segregated Julie from the avant-garde elites in their social circle and allowed her to read books marketed to adults.¹³¹ If, on the other hand, the toy is a toy village, Manet's role is primarily that of observer and surface for the toy to allow Julie to play in a standing

¹²⁷ Wendy Slatkin, *In Her Own Words: A Primary Sourcebook of Autobiographical Texts by Women Artists from the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Charleston, SC: Createspace, 2010), 129.

¹²⁸ Eugène Manet, letter to Berthe Morisot, March 1, 1882, in *Berthe Morisot: The Correspondence*, 119.

¹²⁹ Julie Manet, *Growing up with the Impressionists*, 89.

¹³⁰ Kathleen Adler and Tamar Garb, *Berthe Morisot* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), 85.

¹³¹ Roberts and Roberts, "Introduction," 17-19. See Chapter Three of this dissertation for an examination of the significance of Julie's reading habits.

position. In contrast to the typical “sketchy” brushstrokes that compose the majority of the subject matter, Manet’s right eye is sharply defined (fig. 4), with the iris and white of his eye clearly distinct from his eyelid. A brief linear analysis connects the angle of his iris with Julie’s active left hand (fig. 5). The directional line of his gaze suggests his engagement with and interest in his daughter’s activities, indicating the bond that he implies in his letters to Morisot and that Julie fondly recalls in her diary. Regardless of whether Manet’s eye became so clearly visible as a result of Morisot’s conscious decision, its role in marking a bourgeois father as an active participant in or observer of his daughter’s playtime places him completely and unmistakably “in the moment,” unconcerned with matters unrelated to her actions. Such a depiction distinguishes this portrait from normative portraits in which the patriarch betrays obvious disengagement from the domestic sphere.

Pictures of Normativity

While Morisot was able to portray her unconventional family life as one of blissful fulfillment, increasingly affordable and simple technological innovations introduced the small family to a disruptive element of modernity. During the first half of the 1880s, Morisot, Manet, and Julie sat for a photograph that is believed to be the only surviving representation of the entire family (fig. 6).¹³² Like Morisot’s painting of Manet and Julie, the photograph is set outside in a garden on the family property. From here, the subject matter and subtext of the photograph depart widely from the idyllic moment represented on canvas. Mother, daughter, and father occupy the center of the frame in a

¹³² Unknown photographer. Photograph of Berthe Morisot, Eugène Manet, and Julie Manet at Bougival, 1882-1884, private collection.

triangular configuration that might recall Renaissance-era Holy Family paintings. Morisot sits on a bench, holding the hand of a very small Julie who appears to have just slid to her feet from a seated position. Manet stands behind the bench, seemingly detached from his wife and daughter, his hands placed in his blazer pockets as he stares into the camera. His standing position, as the apex of the family pyramid, behind his female relatives follows common photographic practice, which places the patriarch in the role of provider and protector.¹³³

This configuration and the metaphors contained in the Morisot-Manet family portrait conform to photographs of upper-class families from the middle of the nineteenth century through the 1880s. A studio photograph of the engineering magnate Vicomte Ferdinand de Lesseps with his second wife and their nine surviving children (c. 1882) (fig. 7), taken at approximately the same time as the portrait of the Morisot-Manet family, depicts the family in a similar triangular configuration.¹³⁴ Although Madame de Lesseps serves as the topmost angle of the family pyramid as she holds their infant son, her husband's location on a wicker chair places him in a position of importance while his children, seated on end tables and makeshift stone benches, crowd around him. Unlike Manet, Lesseps does not separate himself from his family but rather holds his second youngest son while two of his daughters huddle to his right. Nevertheless, these positions highlight the elderly patriarch's role not as a nurturer but as a provider and protector. The

¹³³ Thomas, *Impressionist Children*, 165.

¹³⁴ Studio of Nadar, *Vicomte Ferdinand de Lesseps and His Family*, c. 1882, silver albumen print, private collection. By the time the family sat for this photograph, Lesseps, already wealthy and famous for his overseeing of the construction of the Suez Canal, as symbolized by the pyramid in the left-hand side of the backdrop, was overseeing the construction of the Panama Canal, which began that year.

angles at which six of his children sit lead the viewer's eyes toward Lesseps, marking him, not his wife, as the person of primary importance in the family.

The professional photographers employed at Nadar's Paris studio had at their disposal theatrical props that added elements of symbolism that allowed Lesseps to pose in a relatively relaxed position. Such props apparently were not available to the amateur photographer who produced the Morisot-Manet family portrait in the garden at Bougival, thereby necessitating that Manet assume a more rigid and formal pose. In both instances, the man, as husband and father, assume their roles as normative heads of their families. However, Morisot's painted work informs us that this gender-based hierarchy did not exist in her household. In both *Eugène Manet and His Daughter at Bougival* and *Eugène Manet and His Daughter in the Garden* (1883),¹³⁵ (fig. 8) the levels at which Manet and Julie situate themselves and the angles from which Morisot captures the scenes place all three family members on equal standings. Whereas Manet engages directly with his daughter in the earlier painting, his gaze acknowledges his wife's presence behind the canvas in the later work. Both paintings stand in contrast to the family photographs in which both patriarchs' gazes acknowledge only the photographer. When they posed for their photographed portrait, the Morisot-Manet family must have felt compelled to assume established conventions.

To understand the politics of vision at work in family photographs and Morisot's painted family portraits, the theory of the Panopticon helps to explain the encompassing power of the gaze that enforces compulsory normalization. The Panopticon refers to a prison design in which several levels of cells encircled a central guard tower. Because the

¹³⁵ Morisot, *Eugène Manet and His Daughter in the Garden*, 1883, oil on canvas, 60 x 73cm, private collection.

guard could see the prisoners, but the prisoners could not see the guard, the incarcerated had no way of knowing when they were being watched and no means of escaping the complex. As a result, they were conditioned to believe that they were under constant surveillance and forced to conform to normative standards of behavior to avoid punishment.¹³⁶ Michel Foucault, whose theories on normalization and the dynamics of power help form the basis of queer theory, explains that the next logical step was to extend the paradigm of the Panopticon “throughout the social body,” effecting self-policing behavior among “free” citizens.¹³⁷ In other words, everyone was now an object of the all-seeing gaze, and through the internalization of the panopticon, everyone became complicit in his or her own objectification. The role that technology would play would necessitate self-policing to the point of deploying artificial personae in the name of appearing “normal.”

Advancements in the production of visual culture magnified the consequences for anyone who would dare to subvert established norms. In the closing decades of the nineteenth century, the camera grew lighter, less expensive, and easy for amateurs to

¹³⁶ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977), 199–201; Martin Jay elaborates, quoting Foucault's later work, which argues that the “empire of the gaze” (Foucault's words) is inescapable. See “On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of a Work in Progress,” in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 343; quoted in *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 416. Jonathan Crary, as well as Jay, notes Foucault's disagreement with Guy Debord's view of modern culture as a spectacle. Similar to a stage setting, the spectacle also establishes the individual as the object of the gaze. Unlike the Panopticon, however, the spectacle allows the person to know whether he or she is under surveillance. See *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Swerve, 1990); cited in *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 17–18.

¹³⁷ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 207.

operate. Shutter speeds had increased to a fraction of a second, allowing professional and amateur photographers to record fleeting moments of potentially “illicit” behavior several times per minute. In other words, non-conformists were now forced to adopt normative mannerisms when outside the protective boundaries of a supportive private sphere to avoid tarnishing their reputations. The presence of constant surveillance and the possibility of having one’s non-normative “indiscretions” preserved on a permanent medium ensured the adoption of false personae.

Because the family photograph of Morisot and her family eventually adorned the a wall in the main room of their home, as seen in the background of Morisot’s portrait of her niece Jeanne Pontillon (fig. 9),¹³⁸ everyone who entered the home saw the photograph. Despite their ability to avoid pretenses in the intimacy of their small family circle, Morisot and Manet had their public reputations, as well as that of their daughter, to consider. As Pierre Bourdieu observes, “the need to take photographs ... [is] felt all the more intensely the more integrated the group and the more the group is captured at a moment of its highest integration,” such as a wedding in which the nuclear and extended families come together as a single unit. The photograph, he continues, legitimizes and immortalizes such moments.¹³⁹ Susan Sontag reinforces Bourdieu’s argument, describing the camera as a tool that preserves “the token presence of...dispersed relatives.”¹⁴⁰ In other words, photographs manufacture families. By extension, the portrait hanging behind Morisot’s niece validates the status of the artist, her husband, and their daughter

¹³⁸ Morisot, *Portrait of the Artist’s Niece Jeanne Pontillon*, 1894, oil on canvas, 116 x 81cm, private collection, <http://www.the-athenaeum.org/art/detail.php?ID=1799>.

¹³⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, *Photography, a Middle-Brow Art*, trans. Shaun Whiteside, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1998), 19, 21.

¹⁴⁰ Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977), 5.

as a family. When combined with the panoptic potential of the camera, the power of the device to make relationships legitimate substantiated the family's decision to adopt a normative arrangement in the photograph.

Many portraits and other paintings of family life by Morisot's male contemporaries follow a similar pattern of portraying patriarchs as disengaged from their families in the name of preserving the positions of power that sociocultural norms bestowed upon them.¹⁴¹ Most of Degas's portraits depict little to no interaction between fathers and children even when such groups are portrayed within the privacy of the domestic sphere. In particular, *Vicomte Lepic and His Daughters* (c. 1871)¹⁴² (fig. 10) portrays the artist's friend Ludovic Lepic and Lepic's daughters Eylau and Janine as psychologically separate from one another despite their physical closeness conveyed through their overlapping forms. Although Lepic's face forms a directional line toward Janine, he gazes past her, suggesting an occupation with his inner thoughts. Only Janine, perched on the windowsill or doorstep to the viewer's right, engages the viewer, while Eylau appears as a "baby dreamer."¹⁴³ Although her adoption of her father's pensiveness initially unifies them, her air of disengagement distances her from her family and from the viewer.

In addition to the psychic isolation among the family members, Thomas describes the portrait as one of overall formal awkwardness. The formal attire that Lepic and his

¹⁴¹ This is especially true in portraits by Degas and Renoir, who respectively "focused explicitly on the place of the family in men's public identities" and "positioned the family more subtly as a man's possession." See Thomas, *Impressionist Children*, 167.

¹⁴² Edgar Degas, *Vicomte Lepic and His Daughters*, c. 1871, oil on canvas, 66.5 x 81cm, E.G. Bührle Collection, Zurich.

¹⁴³ Mari Kálmán Meller, "Degas's 'Place de La Concorde: Vicomte Lepic and His Daughters,'" *The Burlington Magazine* 145, no. 1201 (April 2003), 275.

daughters wear clashes with their “informal...attitude.” Janine, no more than three years old, is “painted with a large, mature, and detailed head pasted oddly onto a toddler’s sketchy body.” Eylau, just one year her sister’s junior, appears “more babyish [and] floats impossibly in a fluff of fabric.” Their location, Thomas argues, is equally problematic, “hover[ing] between the public and the private, set neither in a garden nor street.”¹⁴⁴ In sum, from unrealistic renderings of the girls’ bodies to the ambiguous setting, the subject matter appears divorced from reality.

By contrast, Degas’s *Place de la Concorde* (1875)¹⁴⁵ (fig. 11), which also depicts Lepic and his daughters, is set in an outdoor public venue. Unlike the earlier painting, all three family members occupy a clearly discernible location in the center of Paris under the observation of the public, as noted by the man at the far left and the horse-drawn carriage in the background. As in earlier painting, Lepic disengages himself from his daughters. Similarly, Eylau and Janine display no evidence of interaction with each other or the family dog (not pictured in the 1871 portrait). The only factor that marks the group as a family is their close physical proximity to one another. Almost coincidentally, all three family members’ ages and bodies appear more realistic than they appear in the earlier portrait.

Before his brief formal analysis of *Vicomte Lepic and His Daughters*, Thomas points out that when producing portraits of men in their roles as fathers, Degas simultaneously incorporated their “public... faces,”¹⁴⁶ as if to remind the viewer that his male subjects had lives outside the domestic sphere. In both France and the United States,

¹⁴⁴ Thomas, *Impressionist Children*, 171–172.

¹⁴⁵ Degas. *Place de la Concorde*, 1875, oil on canvas, 78.4 x 117.5cm, State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia.

¹⁴⁶ Thomas, *Impressionist Children*, 171.

writers of serious manuals and street literature published works instructing readers in the practice of discerning “the character of strangers in the shape, movements, and gestures of the physical body.”¹⁴⁷ James Salazar’s exploration of character in Gilded-Age America illuminates Thomas’s explanation by offering a logical reason for Lepic’s looking past Janine—a stark contrast from Manet’s direct engagement with Julie. Where Manet lived primarily for and through his wife and daughter for the final two decades of his life, Lepic, despite his own inherited wealth, had a public persona as a visual artist, a dog breeder, and founder of an archaeological museum in the southern France.¹⁴⁸ As a heteronormative bourgeois man, Degas knew the importance of men’s “public faces” regarding their masculinity. The presence of their children in their portraits displayed their virility and sense of responsibility, but the simultaneous acknowledgement of duties beyond the home informed the viewer that they had met normative expectations as providers, protectors, and active citizens.¹⁴⁹ As with any form of multitasking, achieving such a balance removes the individual’s complete concentration from his or her immediate surroundings. In the case of Degas’s 1871 portrait of the Lepic family, the patriarch’s consideration of his public identity makes his immediate present less “real,” thus contributing to the unrealistic appearance of his daughters and ambiguity of the setting in which they pose. By contrast, the family’s location in a public space and

¹⁴⁷ James B. Salazar, *Bodies of Reform: The Rhetoric of Character in Gilded Age America* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 24; Shawn Michelle Smith, *American Archives: Gender, Race, and Class in Visual Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 86. Quoted material is from Salazar.

¹⁴⁸ Meller, “Degas’s ‘Place de La Concorde,’” 273.

¹⁴⁹ Sowerwine, “Revisiting the Sexual Contract,” 30; Surkis, *Sexing the Citizen*, 1–16. Sowerwine and Surkis, relying on the gendering of citizenship in France before 1944, point out that the dominant culture emphasized the importance of marriage and fatherhood in the name of continuing republican values and demonstrating a sense of maturity.

Lepic's complete disengagement from his daughters allow bodies and the immediate surroundings to be fully grounded in reality.

If Degas's portraits of disengaged patriarchs constitute the norm, Morisot's portraits of Manet with Julie would be considered queer because they place the patriarch physically and mentally within the domestic sphere. That is, his mind does not wander into the public sphere while he remains completely "in the now," interacting with his daughter and unselfconsciously exhibiting paternal affect. Although Morisot was never normalized into the world of heteronormative masculinity, she was an educated woman who circumvented the norms of femininity in her reading choices,¹⁵⁰ as well as an observant artist who witnessed the behaviors of her father and brother in the home and those of her male friends and colleagues in social and professional settings. Thus, she almost certainly understood how the pressures of the public sphere shaped the men in her life. Even a rudimentary comprehension such pressures would have enabled her to differentiate the actions of normative patriarchs from those of her husband.

Character and the Semi-Retired Executive

At the same time France experienced its "crisis" of masculinity, the United States faced a similar crisis of its own. Divorce, significantly more common in post-bellum America than in Europe, as well as increased "[p]rostitution and alcoholism, plummeting birth rates among white Anglo-Saxons; [and, particularly in the United States,] soaring birth rates among immigrant populations" were only three factors that threatened the

¹⁵⁰ Higdonnet, *Berthe Morisot*, 114.

bourgeois nuclear family during the closing decades of the nineteenth century.¹⁵¹ Not coincidentally, the era also witnessed a reframing of masculinity in the popular imagination, with the heroicizing of aggression, machismo, and militarism.¹⁵² Also as in France, women and “the feminine” were simultaneously lauded and vilified for their “civilizing” capabilities, preventing boys and young men from fostering their machismo. However, American feminism and the suffragist movement, stronger and more visible than their French counterparts, came under increased criticism for the “threat” they posed to heteronormative masculinity.¹⁵³

However, like their French counterparts, American men were encouraged to control their emotions and err on the side of stoicism. Self-control was a key element of character, a complex ideal pertaining to one’s bodily performances, as well as to one’s inner personality. Promoted primarily to American boys and men since the beginning of the republic, character was so deeply ingrained in the normalization of American boys and men by the late nineteenth century that it became a metonym of normative American masculinity.¹⁵⁴ Samuel Smiles, author the popular manual *Character* (1872), instructed his readers to suppress affect “through the creation of *new* instincts...whose very purpose

¹⁵¹ Jan Seidler Ramirez, “The Victorian Household: Stronghold, Sanctuary, or Straightjacket?,” in *Domestic Bliss: Family Life in American Painting, 1840-1910*, ed. Lee M. Edwards (Yonkers, NY: Hudson River Museum, 1986), 12–13.

¹⁵² David Morgan, “Renegotiating Masculinity after the Civil War: Absent Fathers and Women with Beards: Religion and Gender in Popular Imagery of the Nineteenth Century,” in *American Visual Cultures*, ed. David Holloway and John Beck (New York: Continuum, 2005), 43–47.

¹⁵³ Baym, “Melodramas of Beset Manhood,” 586–602; Morgan, “Renegotiating Masculinity,” 45.

¹⁵⁴ Salazar, *Bodies of Reform*, 7–25, 92.

was to operate...as a kind of supplemental self.”¹⁵⁵ In addition to struggling to exhibit the effects of “masculine” culture while shielding themselves from civilizing femininity, bourgeois patriarchs of the United States were now expected to reprogram their nature in the task of producing new instincts that conformed to human-constructed norms. In the “New World,” as in the “Old,” heteronormative bourgeois masculinity was a construct of paradoxes.

The effects of these paradoxes manifest in Cassatt’s rare portrait of fatherhood. As the eldest surviving male child of his family, Aleck Cassatt had met the normative expectations of American high society. From his graduation from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1859 through the 1860s and 1870s, he worked in the railroad industry, earning experience and commendations that would culminate in his promotion to vice president of the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1880. Over the course of the decade, he also co-founded a private business-oriented school for boys that both of his sons would attend, and—at his sister’s urging—became among the first collectors of Impressionist art in the United States.¹⁵⁶

Despite his success as vice president, Aleck resigned two years after assuming the role as a result of disillusionment in his career and escalating family misfortunes.¹⁵⁷ Although his resignation was not a retirement, it enabled him to spend more time with his wife and children both in the Philadelphia area and in France with his parents and

¹⁵⁵ Samuel Smiles, *Character*, 2nd ed. (London: John Murray, 1876); cited in Salazar, *Bodies of Reform*, 91. Italics are Salazar’s.

¹⁵⁶ Michael Bezilla, “Cassatt, Alexander Johnston,” *American National Biography Online*, February 2000, <http://www.anb.org/articles/10/10-00269.html>.

¹⁵⁷ Nancy Mowll Mathews, “The Impressionist: 1878-1886,” in *Cassatt and Her Circle: Selected Letters* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1984), 132.

sisters.¹⁵⁸ During this partial retreat from the public sphere, as the extended Cassatt family gathered in Paris, Aleck and his younger son Robert sat for Cassatt's *Portrait of Alexander J. Cassatt and His Son, Robert Kelso Cassatt* (1884) (fig. 12).¹⁵⁹ Given the familial and general social contexts of the 1880s, this portrait can be read as a revelation of Aleck's struggle to balance his role as a loving father to his son and an inhabitant of the domestic sphere with his corporate persona and the normative culture in which he had been immersed since birth.

In *Alexander Cassatt and His Son*, Cassatt depicts her brother reading the newspaper as he sits in an armchair. Her nephew Robert sits on the right arm of the chair while placing his left arm around his father's shoulders. Unlike her depictions of mothers and children, which arguably convey a sense of sentimentality, Cassatt's portrait of two close family members bears only a slight hint of the sentimental. Her brother directs his gaze toward his newspaper, a connection to the "masculine" public sphere, while her nephew stares straight ahead, his diagonally aligned eyebrows betraying a feeling of uneasiness. Closer inspection of Aleck reveals a slight frown beneath his thick moustache and a growing area of light red—likely embarrassment or subtle frustration—that covers much of his face. This betrayal of emotion could result from a combination of his son's behavior and normative expectations of American bourgeois patriarchs the Gilded Age.

Accounting for the discomfort suggested by both male Cassatts, we could read this double portrait as a record of the awkwardness experienced by wealthy and well-

¹⁵⁸ Bezilla, "Cassatt, Alexander Johnston," *American National Biography Online*, February 2000, <http://www.anb.org/articles/10/10-00269.html>. After Cassatt resigned as vice president, he assumed the roles of railroad director and president of a "lightly trafficked" subsidiary.

¹⁵⁹ Cassatt, *Portrait of Alexander J. Cassatt and His Son, Robert Kelso Cassatt*, 1884, oil on canvas, 100.3 x 81.3cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art.

known industrialist who has spent his life conforming to the normative masculine ideal. At a time when the corporate economy of the United States was becoming a formidable presence, many authors of popular advice literature advised women to focus on child rearing while their husbands earned a living for the family. While long hours away from the private sphere financially benefited many households, the men who toiled to climb the proverbial corporate ladder often missed the opportunity to bond with their children. Unlike France, where moralists encouraged father-child bonding in the mid-nineteenth century, the United States did not see such publications until the early twentieth century,¹⁶⁰ when Robert and his siblings were young adults.

In an environment that largely erred on the side of normative gender essentialism, many relationships between fathers and children were strained, leaving boys to emulate men they rarely saw. By the initial sitting for the double portrait, Aleck's semi-retirement and closer contact with his family gave Robert an opportunity that many of his peers lacked. With the same hair color, red dermal undertones, and black attire as Aleck, Robert signifies his desire to emulate his father. Here, that emulation includes subordinating affect in favor of suggesting the reason necessary for the same masculine autonomy valued among French men. On the other hand, at the age of eleven, Robert had not yet overcome his childhood desire for regular activity. One month after the completion of the portrait, his grandmother would recall his "wriggling about like a flea" while posing for his "Aunt Mary."¹⁶¹ His father, by contrast, seems more tolerant of his son's disposition in a letter to his wife from the same period, explaining as part of his

¹⁶⁰ Robert L. Griswold, "Fatherhood," ed. Bret E. Carroll, *American Masculinities: A Historical Encyclopedia* (New York: Moschovitis Group, 2003), 161–162.

¹⁶¹ Katherine Kelso Johnston Cassatt, letter to Katharine Cassatt, January 21, 1885, reprinted in *Cassatt and Her Circle*, 187.

acceptance of sitting for the portrait that “Rob will not have to pose very much or long at a time [*sic*].”¹⁶²

Despite his understanding words, Aleck’s reddening face and apparent frown suggest a sense of uneasiness or embarrassment. As a successful business executive, he was almost certainly aware of the growing concern with the “boy problem” among popular writers of character-building manuals. Seen as a symptom of increasing urbanization of the American landscape, the “boy problem” included symptoms such as a lack of self-reliance, physical weakness, and “unruly character.” Fearing that this turn toward “degeneracy” would come to define American culture, writers such as Ernest Thompson Seton published manuals proposing to remedy undisciplined behavior.¹⁶³ On the other hand, writers such as Mark Twain saw unruliness as an expected attribute of childhood and feared that advice manuals would produce “mass-produced types, [which threatened] the individuality and authenticity of character that [they were] supposed to cultivate.”¹⁶⁴ As a normative businessman who wanted his son to continue the family tradition of success in business, Aleck would see the merit of the concern with unruliness in boys. However, his letter to his wife suggests an alignment with Twain’s perspective. Perhaps the suggestion of awkwardness in Aleck’s countenance in Cassatt’s portrait results from a simultaneous desire for Robert to restrain his “childish” behavior and an acceptance of unruliness as a “normal” characteristic of childhood.

¹⁶² Alexander Cassatt, letter to Lois Cassatt, December 1884-January 1885, quoted in Jennifer A. Thompson, *Masterpieces from the Philadelphia Museum of Art: Impressionism and Modern Art* (Tokyo: The Yomiuri Shimbun, 2007), 194.

¹⁶³ Ernest Thompson Seton, *Boy Scouts of America: A Handbook of Woodcraft, Scouting, and Life-Craft* (New York: Doubleday, 1910), xi–xii; cited in Salazar, *Bodies of Reform*, 77–78.

¹⁶⁴ Salazar, *Bodies of Reform*, 71.

In sum, *Alexander Cassatt and His Son* runs counter to the norm of portraits of expressionless patriarchs and “well-behaved” children. Aleck’s inability or unwillingness to discipline his son undermines his authority as a normative bourgeois patriarch. By extension, given the close associations that power and authority had with masculinity itself in the late nineteenth century, Aleck’s ambivalence may connote emasculation. The assertion, however, that this is a queer portrait warrants an examination of what constitutes normative portraiture. Having established the norms of family portraiture in the context of Morisot’s portrait of her husband and their daughter, this chapter will conclude with the significance of Aleck’s demeanor in public and domestic portraits in which he appears by himself.

Like Lepic in Degas’s portraits, Aleck knew the significance of performing the role of the stoic public man regardless of the sphere he inhabited. Late nineteenth-century character-building manuals stressed the importance of visible intelligibility of character on the body, an intelligibility that included the performance of body language.¹⁶⁵ As future purveyors of character “[i]n a culture in which oratory was viewed as a major form of cultural influence,” middle-class boys received training in rhetoric that included effective verbal and physical communication. Nan Johnson illuminates this point with an engraving entitled *The Boy Orator* (fig. 13),¹⁶⁶ used as an illustration in Henry Davenport Northrop’s edited anthology *The Ideal Speaker and Entertainer* (1890/1910).¹⁶⁷ The

¹⁶⁵ Salazar, *Bodies of Reform*, 24–27.

¹⁶⁶ *The Boy Orator*, 1890, engraving [artist and dimensions not provided]; printed in Henry Davenport Northrop, ed., *The Ideal Speaker and Entertainer*, 2nd ed. (New York: Bertron, 1910), 12.

¹⁶⁷ Nan Johnson, *Gender and Rhetorical Space in American Life, 1866-1910*. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2002), 3, 38–39; Salazar, *Bodies of Reform*, 17–20.

unidentified subject, dressed in a child's blazer, knee breeches, and riding boots, stands in an erect, modified contrapposto pose with his arms at his sides. His body language suggests a combination of alertness and relaxed confidence. Wearing an expressionless countenance befitting normative masculinity, he gazes toward the viewer and begins to open his mouth, as if to deliver a speech. In sum, *The Boy Orator* serves as a model for boys and men wishing to perform an intelligible grasp on character.

The consciousness of the intelligibility of character and its impact on reputation manifests across portraits of Aleck intended for display in both spheres. His disparaging comments regarding members of the lower classes¹⁶⁸ reveal his class consciousness and the significance of class performance in the public and private realms. Over the course of the 1880s, Cassatt produced at least three portraits of her brother within the private sphere, most relevantly at the home in Paris (1882-83) (fig. 14).¹⁶⁹ Seated in profile in front of a bookshelf in the family library, his pose does not betray the discomfort evident in the double portrait. In fact, the floral pattern on the armchair in the latter portrait bears the same pattern as the one in which he and Robert sit in the double portrait. Unless the family owned multiple armchairs with the same pattern or unless the family later relocated the chair to another room, the double portrait of 1884 is also set in the family library. Instead, he appears relaxed while maintaining a serious disposition. In other words, the private sphere does not elicit evidence of discomfort.

Aleck's persona reflects the character suggested in a public portrait for which he posed toward the end of his life. A man who appears unemotional yet relaxed suggests

¹⁶⁸ Mathews, *Mary Cassatt: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 70.

¹⁶⁹ Cassatt, *Portrait of Mr. Alexander J. Cassatt*, 1882-83, oil on canvas, 101.6 x 81.28cm, private collection.

the rationality necessary for carrying out important business decisions combined with the impression that high-pressure executive responsibilities came effortlessly.¹⁷⁰ These attributes became especially significant in 1899, when he assumed the presidency of the Pennsylvania Railroad, a position that made him “one of the most powerful men in the United States.”¹⁷¹ Four years later, John Singer Sargent painted an official portrait (fig. 15),¹⁷² whose nearly life-sized scale and sober palette underscore the subject’s attire and body language. Here, an older Aleck, standing against an earth-toned background, gazes past the viewer with a rigid expression. His business attire, expressionless countenance, and commanding pose bear a resemblance to *The Boy Orator*, as well as to Sargent’s official portrait of President Theodore Roosevelt (fig. 16),¹⁷³ who was perceived as quintessentially masculine for his big game hunting and military feats, painted the same year. Tucking the thumb of his left hand in his pocket and holding a handkerchief in his right, Aleck conveys a slightly more relaxed appearance than that of the president yet competent enough to befit a high-ranking corporate executive. His closed mouth, a departure from *The Boy Orator*, denotes a sense of judiciousness—of choosing one’s words carefully—that develops as the boy becomes a man. Unlike Cassatt’s portrait of her brother and her nephew, the clear formality of Sargent’s portrait and its removal of attributes of the private sphere lend themselves to the sitter’s professional demeanor.

¹⁷⁰ Smiles, *Character*, 158–187. Throughout the chapter entitled “Self-Control,” Smiles deploys anecdotes of famous historical figures such as Sir Thomas More and George Washington to extol the value of a calm demeanor, especially under trying conditions.

¹⁷¹ Mathews, *Mary Cassatt*, 277.

¹⁷² John Singer Sargent, *Alexander Cassatt*, 1903, oil on canvas, 145.73 x 94.62cm, Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, PA.

¹⁷³ John Singer Sargent, *Official White House Portrait of President Theodore Roosevelt*, 1903, oil on canvas, 147.6 x 101.6cm, The White House, Washington, DC.

Rather, the president of the Pennsylvania Railroad conveys a sense of masculine normativity through the similarities he bears to President of the United States.

Whether posing in a domestic portrait painted by his sister or in an official portrait painted by one of her respected contemporaries, Aleck displays a calm, professional demeanor when depicted alone. Only in his portrait with Robert does he betray evidence of uneasiness. Family correspondence leaves no doubt regarding Aleck's love for his family and tolerance for his son's rambunctiousness. However, the high level of importance that late nineteenth-century American culture held for character in men and boys opens the possibility that the patriarch's suggested discomfort lay in his own striving to maintain a serious demeanor while hoping that his son would sit patiently for his portrait. Coincidentally, the provenance of the portrait in relation to its exhibition history reveals that the painting remained within the private sphere while in the possession of Aleck and his wife, who died in 1906 and 1920, respectively. Only in 1927, after Robert had acquired the portrait, did it appear in a public exhibition.¹⁷⁴ While the exact reason for the seclusion from public view is unknown, the clashing of its subject matter with the dominant culture's emphasis on normative masculinity cannot be discounted.

Conclusion

¹⁷⁴ Catherine Rogers, ed., and the Adelson Galleries, *Mary Cassatt: A New Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings, Pastels, and Watercolors Originally Published by Adelyn Dohme Breeskin*, last updated 2015.

<http://www.marycassatt.com/entry.php?CatalogNumber=136>. The exhibition in question was the Mary Cassatt Memorial Exhibition held at the Philadelphia Museum of Art from April 30 to May 30, 1927.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in France and the United States formed an era of paradox in terms of maintaining and performing gender normativity for bourgeois men. While modern civilization enabled the bourgeoisie to accumulate the wealth necessary to control the means of production, it also became viewed as a force that threatened to feminize the men in power. During this “crisis” of masculinity, prominent thinkers encouraged men on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean to avoid the “feminine” habit of betraying emotion by adopting what were perceived as rational attitudes in order to conceal their fear of gender non-conformity. In family portraiture of the painted and photographed varieties, patriarchs usually constructed the appearance of rationality and lack of emotion through their body language while posing in positions that placed them in the roles of protector, provider, and head of the household. Such attributes manifest in the Nadar’s photograph of the Lesseps family, in which the patriarch fearing emasculation assumes a position of power relative to his wife and children, and in Degas’s portrait of the Lepic family, in which the patriarch psychologically absents himself from the presence of his two small daughters.

By way of comparison, Morisot’s *Eugène Manet and His Daughter in the Garden at Bougival* and Cassatt’s *Alexander Cassatt and His Son Robert Kelso Cassatt* run counter to normative depictions of bourgeois patriarchs. Manet’s active engagement in Julie’s playtime bears a mark of affect not seen in normative portraits of bourgeois patriarchs. Aleck Cassatt fails to maintain an unemotional façade due to his son’s unruly behavior, allowing a hint of uneasiness and embarrassment to surface on his reddening face. While Manet adopts a more active sense of involvement in his child’s presence,

both patriarchs are completely psychologically present in their domestic locations and convey differing degrees of emotional reaction.

Perhaps the difference in how each man performs his portrayed role as a father lies in his public persona. In Europe and the United States, the paradox of bourgeois masculinity governed work and idleness as much as it governed reason and sensibility. Norms dictated that bourgeois men display their more abundant leisure time as a sign of success under the condition that they avoid appearing idle and, thus, “feminine.” Unburdened by “energy-consuming” uteri and obligated to protect and provide for their wives and children, men were to maintain paid employment in the public sphere. Manet’s family fortune and poor health allowed him to circumvent this obligation for the duration of his married life, although his curatorial roles pertaining to Morisot’s work in the Impressionist exhibitions contributed a normative element to his masculine persona and avoid accusations of deviations from the status quo. Otherwise, he was best known as the brother of one well-known avant-garde painter and, later, as the husband and promoter of another.¹⁷⁵ Because of his health, he was better able to retreat to the private sphere and take an active role in his daughter’s playtime without fear of reprisal.

On the other hand, while Aleck Cassatt also enjoyed access to inherited wealth, he also earned a considerable fortune in the railroad industry. He had a public reputation as a senior executive of one of the largest railroads in the United States and, toward the end of his life, an occasional ally of President Theodore Roosevelt in terms of railroad regulation.¹⁷⁶ Even during his temporary semi-retirement, Aleck’s masculine normativity did not allow him to enjoy the luxury of laxity in character when posing for portraits.

¹⁷⁵ Higdonnet, *Berthe Morisot*, 115.

¹⁷⁶ Bezilla, “Cassatt, Alexander Johnston,” February 2000.

Whether the artist for whom he was posing was his sister or a well-known portraitist outside the family, from his interactions with art world, he knew that his likeness could find its way to a public venue just as easily as a private one, necessitating that he perform his normative gender role regardless of where he posed.

Both men had met normative expectations by marrying and fathering children and one led an active career in the public sphere for much of his adult life. However, their portraits with the children who symbolize their virility are queer. Unlike Lepic, whose masculinizing fear of feeling allows him to disengage psychologically from his daughters and renders them and their immediate surroundings unrealistic, Manet and Aleck subtly betray their “feminine” gender position, which places them firmly within the domestic sphere and complicates their access to the public sphere. Unlike Lesseps, placed in a position of power by the chair in which he sits and the directional lines of his children’s bodies, Manet and Aleck almost become analogues of their children: the former as his daughter’s playmate and the latter an older peer whom his son emulates through choice of clothing and attempted indifferent expression but fails to see as an authority figure. In the portrait of the Cassatts, the father’s inability or refusal to control his son’s behavior further undermines his power. In the portrait of the Manets, Julie plays calmly and almost studiously, but she still assumes a degree of power over her father by placing her toy in his lap and inhibiting his ability to move freely. While normative standards gave patriarchs control over the public and private spheres, Morisot and Cassatt capture moments in which two patriarchs cede that control to their children.

FIGURES FOR CHAPTER ONE

Figure 1 Berthe Morisot. *Eugène Manet and His Daughter at Bougival*. 1881. Oil on canvas. 92 x 73cm. Musée Marmottan, Paris.

Figure 2 Berthe Morisot. *Eugène Manet and His Daughter at Bougival*. [Detail of “merging” point between Julie’s dress and Manet’s trouser leg.]

Figure 3 Mary Cassatt. *Emmie and Her Child*. 1889. Oil on canvas. 89.8 x 64.4cm. Wichita Art Museum, Wichita. [Arrow points to “unfinished” foot that seems to emerge from the mother’s clothing.]

Figure 4 Berthe Morisot. *Eugène Manet and His Daughter at Bougival*. [Detail of Manet's eye.]

Figure 5 Berthe Morisot. *Eugène Manet and His Daughter at Bougival*. [Detail and linear analysis of Manet's gaze meeting Julie's hand.]

Figure 6 Anonymous photographer. Photograph of Berthe Morisot, Eugène Manet, and Julie Manet at Bougival. 1880-1882. Private collection. Anne Higonnet. "The Other Side of the Mirror." in *Perspectives on Morisot*. Edited by T.J. Edelstein. (New York: Hudson Hills Press. 1990): 76.

Figure 7 Studio of Nadar. *Vicomte Ferdinand de Lesseps and His Family*. c. 1882. Silver albumen print. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris.

Figure 8 Berthe Morisot. *Eugène Manet and His Daughter in the Garden*. Oil on canvas. 60 x 73cm. Private collection.

Figure 9 Berthe Morisot. *Portrait of the Artist's Niece Jeanne Pontillon*. 1894. Oil on canvas. 116 x 81cm. Private collection. [Arrow points to family photograph hanging on opposite wall.]

Figure 10 Edgar Degas. *Vicomte Lepic and His Daughters*. c. 1871. Oil on canvas. 66.5 x 81cm. E.G. Bührle Collection, Zurich.

Figure 11 Edgar Degas. *Place de la Concorde*. 1875. Oil on canvas. 78.4 x 117.5cm. State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia.

Figure 12 Mary Cassatt. *Alexander Cassatt and His Son*. 1884. Oil on canvas. 100 x 81.2cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia.

Figure 13 Henry Davenport Northrop [?]. *The Boy Orator*. 1890. Engraving. Printed in Henry Davenport Northrop, editor. *The Ideal Speaker and Entertainer*. Second edition. New York: Bertron, 1910: 12.

Figure 14 Mary Cassatt. *Portrait of Mr. Alexander J. Cassatt*. 1882-83. Oil on canvas. 101.6 x 81.28cm. Private collection.

Figure 15 John Singer Sargent. *Alexander Cassatt*. 1903. Oil on canvas. 145.73 x 94.62cm. Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg, PA.

Figure 16 John Singer Sargent. *Official White House Portrait of President Theodore Roosevelt*. 1903. Oil on canvas. 147.6 x 101.6cm. The White House, Washington, DC.

CHAPTER TWO:

INNOCENCE, FUTURITY, AND THE ANIMAL

In the twenty-first century, despite psychoanalytic case studies and the ubiquity of sexual content in daily life, the concept of childhood innocence remains widely accepted as an inherent fact, partly as a means of protecting children from sexual predators¹⁷⁷ but primarily (and historically) due to nostalgia. In a reality of deadlines and other responsibilities, adults take comfort in “looking back” to childhood as a period of life free from the constraints of worry and pressure.¹⁷⁸ Children, according to the popular narrative, enter the world as proverbial blank slates with no knowledge or understanding of the “adult” world. As such, they are assumed to be blissfully ignorant of arousal, sexual frustration, and *jouissance*.¹⁷⁹ Parents or guardians provide the necessities for survival, leaving children unaware of the labor that must be exchanged for the money that procures food, clothing, and shelter. Social and biological categories are believed to be

¹⁷⁷ Kathryn Stockton, *The Queer Child, or Growing Sideways in the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 38, 45–46, 78–88; James Kincaid, “Producing Erotic Children,” in *Curiouser: On the Queerness of Children*, ed. Steven Bruhm and Natasha Hurley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 3–16.

¹⁷⁸ Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 5.

¹⁷⁹ *Jouissance*, in the context of psychoanalytic theory, is explained in detail later in this chapter.

not apparent to innocent children, further clouding their perception of reality and making them oblivious to normative power dynamics based on factors such as sex and gender. In fact, children's presumed ignorance of the "evils" and "impurities" of reality, by extension, make them appear sinless and uncorrupted.

The visual culture of the late nineteenth century, however, provides examples of a departure from the acceptance of the innocent child. While this era was one that gave children increasing legal protections,¹⁸⁰ artists such as Cassatt and Morisot produced portraits of children who deviate from the construct of innocence through such characteristics as their acknowledgement of ephemerality, their "becoming-animal," or their embrace of sexuality. In their portrayals of children who appear to conform to the attributes of innocence, the artists deploy either subtle critiques of conventional wisdom or subtexts pointing to the contradictory nature of innocence and the heteronormative teleology of the child. Through critical theory and comparative analyses with normative contemporaneous depictions of children, this chapter will demonstrate how these departures from the innocence paradigm, despite their more realistic approach to the lives of children, are queer vis-à-vis the norms of the late nineteenth century.

A Brief History of Childhood Innocence and the Problems It Presents

During the eighteenth century, a combination of existing Enlightenment philosophy and emerging Romantic preferences in the arts turned the idea of the innocent child into a perceived fact that persists into the present day. We can see the beginnings of intellectual acceptance of innocence in John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human*

¹⁸⁰ Examples include the first laws against child abuse in Europe and the United States and the outlawing of child labor in France.

Understanding (1690), which casts the newborn as a *tabula rasa*, or blank slate, on which its caretakers have yet to imprint human knowledge and conventions.¹⁸¹ As a blank slate, the lacking child exists separately from both good and evil, thus absolving it of inherent sinfulness, as perceived in many Christian denominations.¹⁸² In the second half of the eighteenth century, Jean-Jacques Rousseau concurred, arguing that human influence alone corrupts the child, while its innocence can be maintained in a state of nature.¹⁸³ Before the dawn of the nineteenth century, the link between innocence and nature would manifest itself in the artistic theme of the “Romantic Child.”¹⁸⁴ Unlike its early modern “small adult” predecessor, the Romantic Child wears clothing, hairstyles, and facial expressions that remove indicators of class, biological sex, and knowledge of adult life.

Higonnet and Cassi Albinson cite Sir Joshua Reynolds’s portrait *The Age of Innocence* (1788)¹⁸⁵ (fig. 1) as one of several artworks of the eighteenth century that would serve as *the* vision of childhood for much of the modern era.¹⁸⁶ Wearing a hairstyle and dress no different from boys in her age group, Reynolds’s young model, identified as

¹⁸¹ In queer theory, this imprinting process is called normalization, an undertaking that will be discussed and critiqued in detail in Chapter Three.

¹⁸² John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (New York: Valentine Seaman, 1824), 60–75.

¹⁸³ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile, or On Education*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 37.

¹⁸⁴ Robert. Rosenblum, *The Romantic Child: From Runge to Sendak* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1988). Rosenblum was among the first art historians to use the term “Romantic Child” to describe the depiction of the child whose physical and psychological characteristics were separate from those of its adult counterparts.

¹⁸⁵ Sir Joshua Reynolds, *The Age of Innocence*, 1788, oil on canvas, 76.5 x 63.8cm, Tate Britain, London.

¹⁸⁶ Anne Higonnet and Cassi Albinson, “Clothing the Child’s Body,” *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body, and Culture* 1, no. 2 (May 1997): 123, 125–129, doi:10.2752/136270497779592075.

his great-niece Offy,¹⁸⁷ sits in front of a backdrop rich in nature and lacking in culture. Her profile pose and her bare feet indicate a connection with the earth that shoes interrupt in adults. Despite this connection, the soles of her feet appear devoid of soil or calluses. In a further departure from reality, the child's white dress, likely symbolic of sexual purity, appears devoid of soil or grass stains. Finally, her facial expression and body language suggests a sense of awe whose source lies beyond the picture plane to the viewer's right. This lack of engagement with the viewer places her in her own world, separated from corrupting adult influences. In short, Reynolds's painting casts the child as the polar opposite of everything that defines the adult.

As Higonnet points out, eighteenth-century cultural authorities turned the child into "the sign of a bygone era, of a past which is necessarily the [distant and lost] past of adults."¹⁸⁸ Partially citing James Kincaid, Stockton describes innocence as "'negative inversions' of adult attributes ... [such as] guilt, sinfulness, knowingness, experience, and so on."¹⁸⁹ In other words, childhood innocence is a form of romanticized nostalgia, based only on adults' distant memories, whose accuracy can be weakened by a number of factors and observations and whose interpretations are often shaped by pre-existing knowledge, which can be questioned and disproved. Seeing children as their polar opposites, adults fashion an image of childhood that is free from the burdens that accompany acquired knowledge and experience.

¹⁸⁷ Colin Heywood, *A History of Childhood: Children and Childhood in the West from Medieval to Modern Times* (Cambridge: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), 25.

¹⁸⁸ Higonnet, *Pictures of Innocence: The History and Crisis of Ideal Childhood* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 27.

¹⁸⁹ James Kincaid, "Producing Erotic Children," in *Curiouser*, 10; quoted in Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 12.

Childhood innocence presents a host of problems and contradictions not only as the concept pertains to actual children but also to the perceptions and expectations of the adults who accept it as truth. Although innocence creates a false image of a child lacking sexual knowledge, Steven Bruhm and Natasha Hurley illuminate that Western culture “accept[s] the teleology of the child...as heterosexually determined.” To further complicate this norm, the dominant culture places greater importance on the child’s presumed heterosexual future than it does on the child’s present. When the future takes priority over the present, adults may excuse any evidence of queerness in the child “as long as the queerness can be rationalized as a series of mistakes or misplaced desires.”¹⁹⁰ In other words, this teleology frames the child as a future adult who is sexually active and a potential parent while it is still in a state of perceived innocence (and ignorance). However, while the agents of normalization direct their concern toward the child’s future, the child, in its assumed state of innocence, is allowed momentary deviations from established norms. Stockton addresses what Bruhm and Hurley imply: that innocence contradicts the teleology of the child because the teleology encourages heteronormative behavior, a characteristic to which children in a state of innocence are supposed to be oblivious. She explains, “adults walk the line—the impossible line—of keeping the child at once what it is (what adults are not) and leading it toward what it cannot...be (what adults are).” This contradiction, combined with the constructed nature of innocence and misremembered pasts of the adults who produce the construct, queers the actual, living child.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ Steven Bruhm and Natasha Hurley, “Curiouser: On the Queerness of Children,” in *Curiouser*, xiv.

¹⁹¹ Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 30–31.

Before Kincaid, Stockton, and other twenty-first-century theorists exposed innocence as a construct that adults project onto children, Sigmund Freud disproved the notion with his case study of the young son of one of his students. This analysis, best known as the case of “Little Hans,” demonstrates that most, if not all, children exhibit sexual curiosity and explains that such behavior is natural. Not only does Freud’s study disprove childhood innocence, it also warns parents and other caregivers that refusing to engage curious children in frank discussions can lead to neuroses as those children develop into adolescents and adults.¹⁹² Freud goes further, explaining that the acceptance of childhood innocence is the result of repression. Building upon the work of his predecessors Albert Moll and Richard von Krafft-Ebing, Freud exposes the existence of sexual impulses in children through the stimulation of “erotogenic zones.”¹⁹³ However, in order to become normative adults, children repress their memories of their earliest sexual experiences and accept “comforting myths of childhood as pure, kind, and good.”¹⁹⁴

During the second half of the nineteenth century, writers and visual artists presaged Freud by challenging the paradigm of childhood innocence. Charles Baudelaire, whose essay “The Painter of Modern Life” (1863) influenced many Impressionist artists, acknowledged childhood desire in his poem “Les Vocations” (1864), particularly in the

¹⁹² Sigmund Freud, *The Sexual Enlightenment of Children*, trans. Philip Rieff (New York: Collier Books, 1963).

¹⁹³ This topic will be revisited in greater detail in the section entitled “Not so Innocent: The Child and the Animal.”

¹⁹⁴ George Makari, *Revolution in Mind: The Creation of Psychoanalysis* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008), 114–115.

recollection of a child who discusses the apparent excitement he experienced when sharing a bed with his maid.¹⁹⁵

As I was not sleeping, I had fun while she slept, running my hand over her arms, neck, and shoulders. She had much bigger arms than all the other women, and her skin is so soft, so soft, that one would think it was writing paper or silk paper. I was having so much fun that I would have continued for a long time if I had not been afraid, afraid first of all of waking her up and secondly afraid of I do not know what.¹⁹⁶

As the child lay in bed with the maid, he glided his hands over her arms, shoulders, and neck, enjoying the moment as he took in the softness of her skin. However, he knew that if he continued, he could have woken her or some unknown effect (“*je ne sais quoi*”) could have occurred. Given the context of the poem, the most logical conclusion is that the unknown he feared was related to the first stirrings of sexual arousal. Whether Baudelaire’s recollection is accurate or a classic case of an adult’s misremembering, he fears the possibility that children do indeed possess knowledge of sexuality.

The field of childhood studies is largely devoid of primary sources produced by children, creating an incomplete record. As such, scholars must read through “adult filters” in a more critical manner¹⁹⁷ or locate departures from the norm in seemingly normative works of visual and literary culture. The analyses in this chapter assist in the

¹⁹⁵ Rosemary Lloyd, *The Land of Lost Content: Children and Childhood in Nineteenth-Century French Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 105–106.

¹⁹⁶ Charles Baudelaire, “Les Vocations,” in *Petits poèmes en prose* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1968), 59, lines 48–55. My translation of Comme je ne dormais pas, je me suis amusé, pendant qu’elle dormait, à passer ma main sur ses bras, sur son cou et sur ses épaules. Elle a les bras et le cou bien plus gros que toutes les autres femmes, et le peau en est si douce, si douce, qu’on dirait du papier à lettre ou du papier de soie. J’y avais tant de plaisir que j’aurais longtemps continué, si je n’avais pas eu peur, peur de la réveiller d’abord, et puis encore peur de je ne sais quoi.

¹⁹⁷ Peter N. Stearns, “Challenges in the History of Childhood,” *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 1, no. 1 (2008): 35–36.

formation of a more accurate record by locating such deviations and illuminating how they complicate both childhood innocence and the heteronormative teleology of the child.

Cassatt's Young Niece: A Subtle Critique

Despite adjustments to the innocent child in visual art and literature, some artworks from the late nineteenth century continue the tradition of visual distinction between adults. Once the concept of innocence became firmly implanted in the dominant culture, artists or their patrons often chose to dress child sitters in oversized outfits. As Higonet explains, such attire gives children the appearance of being “nestled in an oversized fluffy cocoon.”¹⁹⁸ This trend, which began with Reynolds’s portrait of Penelope Boothby in 1788, surfaces in Cassatt’s *Ellen Mary Cassatt in a White Coat* (1896)¹⁹⁹ (fig. 2). In this portrait, Cassatt’s two year-old niece wears an oversized bonnet that dwarfs her head, a long and wide cape from which her hands narrowly emerge, and a frock that engulfs her legs and barely exposes her feet. The overall billowing appearance of the outfit reinforces sexual innocence by concealing specific markers of gender. Without the title of the portrait, the child’s gender could be rendered unintelligible. In fact, Higonet’s choice of the word “cocoon” becomes rather interesting in the formal analysis. It is as if the child is a sexually immature larva entering the pupa stage, where it will remain until it completes its metamorphosis and “emerges” as an imago several years later. In the meantime, the chrysalis will provide shelter from harmful forces. On the other hand, Freud explains that adults often “adopt [an] attitude of mystery toward children” due to

¹⁹⁸ Higonet, *Pictures of Innocence*, 28.

¹⁹⁹ Cassatt, *Ellen Mary Cassatt in a White Coat*, 1896, oil on canvas, 81.28 x 60.33cm, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

their own shame regarding “sexual matters.” A child’s initial sexual stimulation might occur “during infancy,” perhaps when a parent or other caregiver bathes the child or changes its diaper.²⁰⁰ In other words, the child’s “cocoon” could act as protection for adults who wish to repress their awareness of childhood sexuality.

Despite her age, Ellen Mary wears an expression that the gallery label at Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts describes as “serious beyond her years.”²⁰¹ However, scale complicates the portrait, extending from her attire to her immediate surroundings to further emphasize her non-adult status. Although she has moved her body away from the chair back to allow her feet to dangle partially over edge of the seat, she does not obscure the size of her chair. The space between the arms of the chair force the girl to extend her arms outward and forward to reach them. Nancy Mowll Mathews points out that Cassatt modeled Ellen Mary’s pose after that of her older niece Eliza (“Elsie”) from a portrait drawn sixteen years earlier when the latter was five years old (fig. 3).²⁰² While the two cousins rest their outstretched arms and legs in similar positions, Elsie poses in a more relaxed manner, and her lightweight summer dress does not distort her body. In fact, despite Elsie’s advanced age and the larger dimensions of her portrait, her cousin’s oversized and bulky clothing give her a more imposing appearance. Usually, according to Higonnet, outfits such as the one in which Ellen Mary is dressed make children appear “not-big-enough” in relation to their adult counterparts, giving them “cute” and non-

²⁰⁰ Freud, *The Sexual Enlightenment of Children*, 19.

²⁰¹ “Ellen Mary in a White Coat,” *Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, accessed March 1, 2015, <http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/ellen-mary-in-a-white-coat-34519>.

²⁰² Nancy Mowll Mathews, *Mary Cassatt: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 236.

threatening characteristics that adults no longer possess.²⁰³ However, Cassatt's rendering of her youngest niece seems to subvert this objective to endow the child with adult characteristics.

This depiction of a child in oversized attire is not unique in Cassatt's oeuvre. Her print *In the Omnibus* (1890-91)²⁰⁴ (fig. 4) depicts a bourgeois matriarch, the nanny she employs, and an infant aboard public transit. Like Ellen Mary, the child wears a large white bonnet and a white cocoon-like garment from which only its head, legs and left hand emerge. Whereas the child's attire appears to consume its body, the form-fitting dresses on the child's mother and nanny clearly demarcate their sleeves and accentuate their corseted bodies. These sartorial differences underscore the "innocence" of the child in relation to the "experience" of the adults. However, as Cassatt would do with her niece approximately five years later, she inflates the infant on the omnibus to place its scale on a nearly equal level with the upper half of its nanny's body.

In addition to exaggerated scale, artists may also deploy outmoded trends in fashion and interior design to solidify the separation between children and adults. Higonet's assertion that the innocent child is a symbol of the distant, irretrievable past of adults primarily alludes to the outdated clothing fashions in which artists and parents dressed their children for portraits. However, in Cassatt's portrait of her niece, it is the chair, which Griselda Pollock dates to the eighteenth century,²⁰⁵ that evokes the "lost past." While Ellen Mary's oversized clothing seems to engulf her small body, the large

²⁰³ Higonet, *Pictures of Innocence*, 28.

²⁰⁴ Cassatt, *In the Omnibus*, 1890-91, dry point and aquatint on laid paper, 43 x 29.8cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

²⁰⁵ Griselda Pollock, *Mary Cassatt: Painter of Modern Women* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 132.

chair in which she sits isolates her from her surroundings. Its armrests enclose her from the right and left, while its height hinders her ability to rest her feet on the floor.

Although Ellen Mary and her aunt actually exist in the late nineteenth century, the chair metaphorically encloses the child in the eighteenth, creating a temporal barrier between the child sitter and the adult artist.

Despite the perceived normativity of associating the child with a “lost past” as a means of preserving the idea of their innocence, such temporal displacement actually queers the child. Elizabeth Freeman’s analysis of queer temporality includes a discussion of *chronobiopolitics*, which organizes sexual events not of the lives of individuals but, rather, of “entire populations...whose individual bodies are synchronized not only with one another but also with larger temporal schemae experience belonging itself [*sic*] as natural.”²⁰⁶ Under chronobiopolitics, powerful institutions, such as the state, arranges events (which Freeman calls “narratives of movement and change”) such as “marriage, accumulation of health and wealth for the future, reproduction, childrearing, and death and its attendant rituals” are organized in terms of teleologies. Elements of the past, she argues, queer the normative chronology.²⁰⁷ Such temporal displacement also contradicts the paradigm of the Child (as idea) representing the future and the promise of repetition of established norms through heterosexual reproduction.²⁰⁸ The chair in which Ellen Mary sits queers her by placing her in the previous century, placing her outside the

²⁰⁶ Dana Luciano, *Arranging Grief: Sacred Time and the Body in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 9; cited in Elizabeth Freeman, *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 3–4. Quotation is Freeman’s.

²⁰⁷ Freeman, *Time Binds*, 4–5, 8.

²⁰⁸ Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

chronobiopolitical norm that members of her age group will follow. As such, she will complete her life cycle before her historical date of birth, creating a paradox that will prevent her from realizing her heteronormative teleologies as dictated by chronobiopolitics.

Although the scale of Ellen Mary's attire and the age of the chair in which she sits appear to celebrate her presumed innocence, additional elements in the portrait suggest the possibility of an artistic critique of the Romantic Child. Pollock notes how the "strict geometries of [the] furniture and clothes" governing the positions of the organic forms of the child's body contribute to her tenuous grasp of the armrests and the awkward positioning of her feet.²⁰⁹ In a normative portrait, by contrast, the child would be seated in a chair that enables the child to position its arms, legs, and feet more comfortably. This sense of ease can be seen in Pierre-Auguste Renoir's *White Pierrot* (1901-02)²¹⁰ (fig. 5), in which the artist's son Jean poses in the costume of the iconic clown from the *Commedia dell'Arte*. Like Ellen Mary, Jean wears an outfit that dwarfs his body, with his hands and feet barely emerging from his oversized blouse and pants. However, the back of the simple wooden chair on which he sits is nearly to scale with his torso, allowing him to rest his right forearm and elbow without having to raise his shoulder at a steep angle as he rests his left hand on his left thigh. Similarly, the horizontal dowels between the chair legs are located at a height that allow Jean to rest his right foot on one of them while touching the floor with the toes of his left foot. In total, the dimensions of the chair

²⁰⁹ Pollock, *Mary Cassatt*, 132.

²¹⁰ Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *The White Pierrot*, 1901-02, oil on canvas, 79.1 x 61.9cm, Detroit Institute of Arts.

enable the child to sit in a relaxed, informal position. Nothing in his body language suggests the awkwardness that Cassatt's niece betrays.

In addition to the lack of awkwardness in Jean's pose, the blank background, lack of specific details in his chair, and context of his attire add to the portrait's normativity. Whereas the antique status of Ellen Mary's chair displaces her from her present time, the comparative simplicity of the elements in Renoir's portrait suggest a sense of timelessness, allowing Jean to occupy his own present of the early twentieth century. This temporal location places him on the same timeline as potential future mates in his age group, thus maintaining the promise of his own role in heteronormative reproduction.

While the lack of detail in the chair and background create a temporal normativity, the cultural context of Jean's attire creates a gender specificity that is absent in the portrait of Ellen Mary. Until the end of the First World War, children of both sexes wore long hair and skirts or frocks until the age of seven.²¹¹ During this phase of life, called the *première enfance*, visible markers of gender differentiation were not significant, as children were taught basic concepts such as arithmetic and behavioral skills that were considered essential to both sexes. Although Ellen Mary's large coat and awkward pose obscure her legs, the viewer may assume that she wears a dress. On the other hand, only the title of the portrait informs the viewer that the sitter is a girl. Given her small stature and oversized clothing that masks her female identity, visual clues alone do not provide sufficient information. However, Renoir clearly indicates that his son has entered a new phase of childhood. From the age on seven onward (the *deuxième enfance*),

²¹¹ Colin Heywood, *Growing Up in France: From the Ancien Régime to the Third Republic* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 79–80; Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, trans. Robert Baldick (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), 58.

when preparation for adulthood assumed greater importance, boys began to wear trousers, while girls continued to wear dresses.²¹² The presence of trousers in Jean's Pierrot costume marks him as specifically male and in his *deuxième enfance*, which, like his occupation of the present, ensures his potential to participate in the teleological norms that Western culture has established for him.

When analyzed in comparison to Renoir's *White Pierrot*, the queerness of Cassatt's *Ellen Mary Cassatt in a White Coat* becomes clear. The latter, on the surface, is a picture of the traditional innocent child that demonstrates an incompatibility between innocence and heteronormativity. Ellen Mary's oversized coat, which blurs her gender, and antique chair, which places her in the past, destabilize her ability to participate in heteronormative reproductive futurity. However, Cassatt uses her niece's outfit and the chair in which she sits to convey a sense of awkwardness that the traditional picture of innocence fails to capture. In sum, the portrait treads a middle ground that criticizes both innocence and normativity and informs the viewer that the actual, living child in its "natural" state is queer in relation to conventional wisdom.

Reynolds Revisited: Enter Ephemerality

Among the many works in Morisot's oeuvre that document her daughter's childhood and adolescence, *Les Pâtés de Sable (Sand Pies)* (1882)²¹³ (fig. 6) stands out as a formal and contextual contrast to Reynolds's *The Age of Innocence*. In Morisot's painting, a three year-old Julie, wearing a white dress, brown bonnet, and what appear to

²¹² Heywood, *Growing Up in France*, 79–80.

²¹³ Morisot, *Les Pâtés de Sable (Sand Pies)*, 1882, oil on canvas, 92 x 73cm, private collection.

be black shoes or sandals, crouches at the edge of the garden at Bougival sifting sand above a red bucket. Once her bucket is full, she will use the watering can in front of her to moisten the sand and model it into the forms of pies. Like Reynolds's great niece, Julie has direct contact with a form of earth, affirming the much historicized female connection to nature.²¹⁴ Both children wear immaculately white dresses whose fabric is only slightly paler than their untanned and unsoiled skin. Neither child exchanges the viewer's gaze, directing her attention somewhere to the audience's right yet outside the viewer's realm of modern culture. However, despite these similarities, we cannot call *Les Pâtés de Sable* a picture of innocence.

Innocence in its original sense implies complete removal from the realms of culture and adulthood. Truly "innocent" children are living paradoxes—at one with nature yet eternally clean, immersed in the animal kingdom yet oblivious to carnal matters, removed from the shelter of adults and modern culture yet never imperiled by hungry carnivores or natural disasters, blissfully ignorant yet capable of surviving in the wild. Reynolds's model is that living paradox; Julie's making sand pies deviates from the paradox. Unlike her Romantic counterpart who merely poses and betrays no hint of active play, Julie actively engages in the creative process, sifting sand, moistening it with water, and shaping into pie-shaped forms with her hands. This activity will guarantee that her hands and possibly her dress will become soiled in the minutes that follow the moment

²¹⁴ The dichotomy assigning women to the realm of nature and men to that of culture is deeply established in the fields of feminist and gender studies, dating at least to the writings of Mary Wollstonecraft in 1792. See *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 1996). Key texts in art history include Linda Nochlin, "Women, Art, and Power," in *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988), 1–36; Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2013); and Whitney Chadwick, *Women, Art, and Society*, 3rd ed. (London: Thames and Hudson, 2002).

captured on canvas. A soiled state would contradict the idealized image of the female child who conforms to her expected future roles of upper middle-class wife and mother. By deviating from the ideal, the child interrupts her conformity to established norms, setting the stage for future deviations and endangering her prospects of attracting a future husband who will almost certainly guarantee her participation in reproductive futurity.

While describing *Les Pâtés de Sable* in her journal entry detailing Morisot's memorial exhibition of 1896, Julie recalls a brief conversation with her mother from several years earlier: "'If your Maman was lost,' Maman asked me, 'what would you do?' 'I'd play in the sand,' I replied innocently." Aside from expressing the "ultimate happiness" she experienced from playing in the sand at Bougival,²¹⁵ she does not provide additional context for the painting or the conversation. Given the poor health that Julie's parents experienced, as well as her uncle Édouard's advancing nervous ataxia that would claim his life the following year, we could reasonably conclude that "lost (*perdue*)" was Morisot's euphemism for "dead." Whether Julie, still a small child at the time, interpreted her mother's words literally or, considering her apparently advanced intellect, recognized them as figurative, we should not dismiss her reply as inattentive or emotionally distanced—although she describes her response as "innocent." Rather, the joy she experienced from making sand pies would have comforted her in a time of emotional turmoil.

Given the role of grief and its alleviation as part of the context of *Les Pâtés de Sable*, the painting's theme of ephemerality should not be overlooked. As with large-

²¹⁵ Julie Manet, *Growing up with the Impressionists: The Diary of Julie Manet*, ed. Roslind de Boland Roberts and Jane Roberts, trans. Rosalind de Boland Roberts and Jane Roberts (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1987), 93.

scale earthworks, sand pies will eventually succumb to rain, wind, and other forms of erosion. Like the birth of a child, the creation of sand pies marks the beginning of an impermanent existence, a theme that hardly comes to mind when analyzing *The Age of Innocence*. If innocence is a period of blissful ignorance of the burdens of the adult world, it would follow that children would find themselves oblivious to matters of death—whether the death is their own or that of a loved one. Offy’s apparent isolation from the realm of adult concerns suggests her ignorance of mortality, while Julie appears to engage directly with death.

Late nineteenth-century literature, while largely distanced from the notion of the Romantic Child, establishes childhood and death as opposites. In the beginning of Zola’s novel *La Fortune des Rougon* (1871), republican sympathizers Miette and Silvière recall their childhood as they face “death at the hands of the government troops [of the Second Empire].” Raised by abusive or emotionally distant guardians in the absence of their biological parents, both protagonists spend their childhood “removed from the rest of the world” and, despite their status as neighbors, removed from each other by “social[,] psychological...visual, and communicative” barriers.²¹⁶ The cruel reality faced by Miette and Silvière during their childhood contravenes the paradigm of innocence. However, the physical and metaphorical boundaries that enclose each of them during their youth solidly demarcate their past selves, who face a brief future together, from their present selves, who only await their own mortality.

Just as mortality runs counter to the state of childhood and innocence, it also counters the normative association of children with reproductive futurity. This would

²¹⁶ William J Berg, *The Visual Novel: Emile Zola and the Art of His Times* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 69.

have been true in the 1880s, when child mortality rates began to witness a decline in France.²¹⁷ The heteronormative image of the child as the future, by its very nature, would necessitate disregarding the child's mortality before it bore the next generation. Furthermore, the child's consideration of its own mortality would also counteract the heteronormative teleology of childhood. The "primitive" or "regressive" drive toward a return to non-existence, or "death drive" in Freudian psychoanalysis, contradicts Eros, or the "life-instinct," necessary for heteronormative reproduction.²¹⁸ In his subsequent writings, Freud associated the death drive with the "destroying instinct," which the id, or libido, renders "innocuous."²¹⁹

Although Freud would later return the association of the libido to the realm of Eros,²²⁰ Lacan reformulated the concept to include the complex notion of *jouissance*. Transcending the term's direct translation of "enjoyment," Lacanian *jouissance*, as Lee Edelman describes it, is the "unnamable remainder [of the Real order]...a movement beyond the pleasure principle, beyond the distinctions of pleasure and pain, a violent passage beyond the bounds of identity, meaning, and law." The individual is drawn to this "passage," which, in turn, may become "attached to a particular object" perceived as the means of fulfilling one's desires. However, as *jouissance* compels the individual

²¹⁷ Heywood, *Growing Up in France*, 177.

²¹⁸ Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, trans. C.J.M. Hubback, 2nd ed. (London: International Psychoanalytical Press, 1922), 69–79. In this early translation, Hubback mistranslates *Todestrieb* as "death-instinct," despite clear distinctions between *der Trieb* (drive) and *der Instinkt* in the original German. See Adrian Johnston, "Jacques Lacan," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Summer 2014, 2014, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/lacan/>.

²¹⁹ Freud, "The Economic Problem of Masochism," in *On Metapsychology: The Theory of Psychoanalysis*, trans. James Strachey (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991), 418.

²²⁰ Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1973), 455–456.

toward satisfaction, it “dissolves” the individual’s fondness for its object and risks unraveling “the social reality” that can only exist through “Imaginary identifications...[and] Symbolic law.” At its extreme, *jouissance* can drive the individual toward what Lacan called “the quintessential unnamable,” or death.²²¹ In other words, *jouissance* holds the potential to trigger the death drive through the pretext of the fulfillment of desire.

For Edelman, the child, as a symbol of futurity, is associated with the first aspect of the death drive, the fixation on a particular object. On the other hand, the second aspect, that which unravels the attachment to futurity, is “bound up with...the figure of the queer.”²²² Heteronormative reproduction ensures the survival of genetic material *ad infinitum* if each generation procreates. Therefore, the child may signify not only futurity but also immortality. By contrast, the queer, associated with the conscious absence of heteronormative reproduction, may signify death. In this sense, the queer stands in opposition to reproductive futurity.

Freud’s case study of *fort/da* links the death drive to children. *Fort/da* involved Freud’s grandson’s repetitive act of throwing his toy (which was attached to a string) over the edge of his cot and out of view (*fort*) only to maintain his grasp of the string with which he would pull his toy back into view (*da*). Freud interpreted the boy’s actions as a game in which the absence and presence of the toy served as a re-enactment of the “disappearance” and reappearance of the boy’s mother. Because the disappearance of the toy occurred more often than its reappearance, Freud omitted the possibility that

²²¹ Edelman, *No Future*, 25. Edelman quotes Lacan from *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis, 1959-1960*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. Dennis Porter (New York: Norton, 1992), 212.

²²² Edelman, *No Future*, 25–26.

disappearance formed the prelude to the reunion between the child and a beloved object. The game's significance, Freud reasoned, was "the foregoing of the satisfaction of an instinct...[in] which [the child] could let his mother go away without making any fuss."

²²³ In other words, through the act of play, the child learned to accept short-term and long-term (or permanent) separation.

The child's repeated symbolic re-enactment of his mother's disappearance, as opposed to "reminiscences" of the event commonly seen in hysterics, mirrored war veterans' repeated re-enactment of their traumatic experiences in battle—often involving the deaths of their comrades. The portions of the ego that are conscious and preconscious, Freud explains, normally prevent the release of traumatic experiences from the largely unconscious ego in an effort to protect the self. Why, then, would a traumatized individual fall into a pattern of "repetition-compulsion?" If trauma induces regression, it would follow that primitive drives, including the drive to return to the inorganic, would be awakened in the process.²²⁴ Whether the case study involved a traumatized soldier or a child individuating itself from its mother, the compulsion to repeat death (or symbolic death) appears linked to the death drive.

In a similar vein as *fort/da*, Julie's playing in the sand parallels her acceptance of the absence of her mother. Her creation of sand pies brings the forms into her field of vision. In the hours or days following her playtime, the sand pies would disappear when she either crumbled the forms back into the earth or when the elements completely eroded them. As Julie later recalls in her diary, playing in the sand was a regular—repeated—activity in which she enjoyed engaging as a child. Just as Freud's grandson

²²³ Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 11–16.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 17–25, 76.

repeated *fort/da* as a method of accepting his mother's absence, Julie's creation of sand pies would substantiate her intention to play in the sand if her mother were "lost."

The themes of repetition-compulsion and the death drive in *Les Pâtés de Sable* contrast with a comparatively normative depiction of child's play seen in Manet's *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* (1862)²²⁵ (fig. 8). Two children, presumably girls, occupy the bottom center of the foreground amid a crowd of bourgeois adult concert attendees. Both wear white dresses adorned with large elaborate sashes tied around their waists. Almost prefiguring Julie's actions twenty years later,²²⁶ one child kneels, turning most of her body away from the viewer, as she scoops soil from the ground into her bucket. Like Julie, she focuses her attention on the task at hand, seemingly oblivious to the activities surrounding her. Unlike Julie, however, this child holds only a spoon, which she uses to dig and collect soil. She possesses no other tools that would allow her to sift and create ephemeral "pies." Her companion stands, facing the viewer, with her attention directed downward toward her companion. The position of her legs indicates that she intends to step forward or kneel down to begin digging. Although they are surrounded by adults, the children's attention on their own activity removes them from the adult world, recalling, at least partially, the Romantic Child. The two women sitting to the left of the children

²²⁵ Édouard Manet, *Music in the Tuileries Gardens*, 1862, oil on canvas, 76.2 x 118.1 cm, National Gallery, London.

²²⁶ Although similarities such as those between Julie and Manet's child digger have lead past scholars to name Manet as one of Morisot's teachers, more recent scholarship refutes this assertion, identifying him as an influence. See Kathleen Adler and Tamar Garb, *Berthe Morisot* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), 29. Nancy Locke dedicates a chapter to Morisot's role as Manet's model from 1868 to 1872, as well as her role as a friend in the years after her marriage. Because of these relationships, Morisot undoubtedly saw his previous paintings and drew influence from them. See *Manet and the Family Romance* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 147–171

could be their mothers; however, no evidence exists to verify how, or whether, they are related.

Thomas points out that Julius Meier-Graefe identifies the “veiled woman,” who appears to place her hand on her swollen stomach, as Herminie Offenbach,²²⁷ then pregnant with her fifth child. If the veiled woman is Offenbach, one of the children could be her daughter Albertine. Assuming the woman is pregnant, she obviously signifies Eros and heteronormative reproduction. Regardless of the relationship between the women and the children, Thomas argues that the children’s formal attire “evoke[s] the theme of reproducing bourgeois feminine identity.”²²⁸ Furthermore, their location at a public event places them under public scrutiny that they would avoid in a private garden. According to Hippolyte Taine, who wrote *Notes de Paris* five years after Manet completed this painting, young girls often used public gatherings in the Tuileries Gardens as opportunities to practice the normative femininity that they would be expected to perform as adult members of bourgeois society.²²⁹ For the girls in the foreground of Manet’s painting, their interiority and sartorial conformity mark the beginning of such practice. Although they are disengaged from the adults, the adults’ behavior, especially that of the women, serves as an example for the behavior the children must learn to perform and subsequently teach to their own offspring. In sum, this public outing comprises part of their training to ensure their future roles as heteronormatively reproducing adults.

²²⁷ Julius Meier-Graefe, *Edouard Manet* (Munich: R. Piper, 1912), 107–108, <http://archive.org/details/edouardmanet00meieuoft>; cited in Greg M. Thomas, *Impressionist Children: Childhood, Family, and Modern Identity in French Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 139. Quote is from Thomas.

²²⁸ Thomas, *Impressionist Children*, 139.

²²⁹ Hippolyte Taine, *Notes sur Paris: Vie et opinions de M. Frédéric-Thomas Graindorge* (Paris: L. Hachette, 1867), 78, <http://archive.org/details/notessurparisvie00tain>.

Whereas the children in *Music in the Tuileries Garden* display the potential of Eros, Julie, despite her similar contact with earthen materials, engages in an activity that not only produces ephemeral objects but also connects with the specter of her mother's mortality. Playing in the sand brought her enjoyment as a child but would also bring her the ability to cope with the "loss" of a loved one. As Freud discovered with *fort/da*, play that allows children to accept the absence of close relatives like their mothers introduces them to the death drive. In turn, the death drive endangers the futurity that the child represents.

The Child as Animal

The image of the innocent child at one with nature and divorced from the world of culture becomes problematic upon consideration of the role of the animal. Nature, in its complete form, includes non-human animals. In his painting *The Peaceable Kingdom* (1834)²³⁰ (fig. 9), Edward Hicks depicts an imagined scene based on a Biblical verse in which children, wearing clothing and hairstyles similar to the traditional Romantic Child, interact peacefully with carnivorous animals, such as a lion and a leopard, as well as herbivorous animals, such as a deer and a sheep. Such a scene conforms to the accepted image of childhood innocence. In reality, the animals' basic survival instincts would compel them to either react violently toward the children or flee from them. More relevantly, the concept of innocence fails to acknowledge that non-human animals act on their sexual impulses. While the sexual instinct would seem to conform to the heteronormative teleology of childhood, the parallel between children and non-human

²³⁰ Edward Hicks, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 1834, oil on canvas, 74.5 x 90.1 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

animals is actually a queer one because children in a non-human state cannot develop into normative human adults who will make new humans through heterosexual reproduction.

Although not immediately obvious, the theme of the child and the animal appears in *Les Pâtés de Sable*. Thomas notes that the ruffles on the back of Julie's dress "[fan] out like a bird's tail."²³¹ He uses this observation as nothing more than a vivid description, as implied by the absence of elaborating context in the remainder of the paragraph.

However, close inspection of the pale and translucent green brushstrokes between her back and the tan area denoting the sand reveal shapes similar to those of wings. Between Julie's forehead and the top of the watering can hovers a pale green and white bird-like form (fig. 7). Moreover, these avian qualities correspond to the child-animal analogies in contemporary legal, pedagogical, and scientific theories. In the nineteenth century, conventional wisdom in the United States placed children among the "animal species," a belief that played a role in the infamous "Mary Ellen Affair" of 1874.²³² When ten-year-old Manhattan resident Mary Ellen McCormack was discovered severely abused by her adoptive parents, social workers successfully used laws against cruelty to animals to argue that children should be afforded the same protections.²³³ In France, the late nineteenth century was also a time of transition for childhood, especially in terms of pedagogical theory. In the final years of the century, a growing number of progressive educators advocated an "active" approach to education, in which children were allowed to "blossom" at their own rates. However, traditional educators maintained that children lacked the ability to reason and, as such, their education should entail discipline that some

²³¹ Thomas, *Impressionist Children*, 10, 103.

²³² Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 65.

²³³ Howard Markel, "Case Shined First Light on Abuse of Children," *The New York Times*, December 14, 2009; Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 94.

figures likened to the taming of wild animals.²³⁴ In fact, many biologists used Darwinian theory to draw parallels between children and animals, using infantile speech and reasoning capabilities as examples of similarities between the species.²³⁵ Decades later, Freud upheld perceived parallels between human children and animals, stating in *Totem and Taboo* that children do not hesitate to see animals “as their full equals.” The desire to differentiate “[human] nature [from] that of other animals,” he continues, is a learned construct present only in adult humans. Given this contrast in how each group views other species, as well as children’s lack of restraint “in the avowal of their bodily needs,” Freud argues that children likely feel “more akin to animals than to their [human] elders.”²³⁶ In short, it would seem that, by incorporating the appearance of avian tail feathers into her daughter’s attire amid a rich context of parallels between children and the non-human, Morisot’s painting would be normative by late nineteenth-century standards.

Despite contemporaneous thought regarding the child and the animal, non-human attributes actually queer the human child on which they appear. Julie’s “wings” and “tail feathers” in *Les Pâtés de Sable* calls to mind Gilles Deleuze’s and Félix Guattari’s philosophy of “becoming-animal.” Deleuze and Guattari clarify that becoming-animal is not a physical shape shifting from human to animal but rather a process that occurs on a molecular level. Understanding this complex theory requires first a comprehension of

²³⁴ Marion Thomas, “Are Animals Just Noisy Machines?: Louis Boutan and the Co-Invention of Animal and Child Psychology in the French Third Republic,” *Journal of the History of Biology* 38, no. 3 (October 1, 2005): 439.

²³⁵ Thomas, “Are Animals Just Noisy Machines?,” 437.

²³⁶ Freud, *Totem and Taboo: Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics*, trans. James Strachey (London: Routledge, 1950), 126–127.

their classifications of animals into individuated, archetypal, and demonic.²³⁷

Individuated animals, kept as “family pets,” possess a “petty history” traced through the perspectives of the humans who keep them as companions (“‘my’ cat, ‘my’ dog”). Like children’s relationships to their parents, the lives and identities of these companion animals are reflected through those who provide their food, shelter, and other necessities, as opposed to existing autonomously. Archetypal animals, on the other hand, assume symbolic value in human culture. For example, dogs commonly appear in the Western canon as symbols and metaphors of marital fidelity. Finally, demonic animals, “form a multiplicity, a becoming...” The reader quickly learns that all animals may “be treated in all three ways.”²³⁸

The word “treated” implies not natural states, but ways in which humans relate to animals. Demonic animals, which Deleuze and Guattari also call the “pack or affect animals,”²³⁹ should not be confused with actual pack animals, such as wolves. Richard Iveson explains that each “single, autonomous [animal]...is [in the animal’s own reality] always already a pack.” However, humans do not treat every individual animal as a pack, thus rendering that animal’s pack mentality “hard to discover.” This usually occurs in the animal treated as a companion or archetype. On the other hand, the animal humans do treat as a pack animal bears an easily recognizable pack mentality.²⁴⁰ The animal whose “multiplicity” is acknowledged serves as a vehicle for becoming-animal, an alliance

²³⁷ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, “1730: Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal, Becoming-Imperceptible...,” in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 240–241.

²³⁸ Deleuze and Guattari, “1730,” 240–241.

²³⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, “1730,” 241.

²⁴⁰ Richard Iveson, “Deeply Ecological Deleuze and Guattari: Humanism’s Becoming-Animal,” *Humanimalia: A Journal of Human/Animal Interface Studies* 4, no. 2 (Spring 2013): 36.

formed between the human and the animal through the former's relation to the latter. To avoid the risk of confusing a becoming with the relationship between the human and the individuated animal, Deleuze and Guattari specify that humans "do not become animal without a fascination for the pack, for multiplicity."²⁴¹

Becoming-animal also requires an understanding of how Deleuze and Guattari picture the world—through the concept of the rhizome. Although the rhizome branches out in multiple directions like a plant's root system, it also "connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature." Unlike the tree model of growth or development, "[t]he rhizome is an antigenealogy." Rhizomes are composed of "plateaus," which in turn, form when lines of being called "intensities" cross one another.²⁴² These plateaus allow becomings to take place. Otherwise, communication between "human and animal worlds" is impossible. Because this system remains in a constant state of flux, the existence of a plateau is only temporary and never reforms in the same manner.²⁴³ Therefore, no two becomings will ever be exactly alike. One may become the same animal more than once, but each experience will be unique.

Deleuze and Guattari explain that a becoming is a molecular process,²⁴⁴ which always occurs at an unconscious level.²⁴⁵ In other words, we may conclude that the process is involuntary. While the conscious mind is preoccupied with tasks, such as creating art, the unconscious mind might begin to engage in a becoming. Although Deleuze and Guattari state that "we can be thrown into a becoming by anything at all,"

²⁴¹ Deleuze and Guattari, "1730," 238-241, 249.

²⁴² Deleuze and Guattari, "Introduction: Rhizome," in *A Thousand Plateaus*, 21.

²⁴³ Akira Lippit, *Electric Animal: Toward a Rhetoric of Wildlife* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 128.

²⁴⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, "1730," 248.

²⁴⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, "1914: One or Several Wolves?," in *A Thousand Plateaus*, 33.

they also point out that the production of the visual and performing arts “have no other aim [than] to unleash...becomings.”²⁴⁶ Of all humans, then, professional and amateur artists are most likely to experience becomings.

Steve Baker elaborates that the creative process displaces the human from “anthropocentric meaning and subjective identity,” a transformation that he equates with “the animal’s work.”²⁴⁷ He extends the links between the creative process, becoming-animal, and the human’s existence “other-than-in-identity” from the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari to Hélène Cixous’s description of the force that compels the writer to write: “To be taken by surprise. To find myself in the possibility of the unexpected. To fall asleep a mouse and wake up an eagle! What delight! And what terror! And I had nothing to do with it.”²⁴⁸ Cixous’s quote emphasizes the creative force as an involuntary one that lifts the artist out of his or her sense of human identity to effect a simultaneously exhilarating and frightening event that results in the production of a given art form.

Being displaced from one’s identity recalls Butler. While she does not object to the deployment of identity categories, she warns of “the risk that attends every such use.” Connotations used in the past control current efforts to redefine or reclaim particular categories, and current understandings will constrain similar efforts in the future. Furthermore, she argues, identity categories do not determine one’s object of desire.²⁴⁹ In other words, a physical appearance that conforms to normative understandings of

²⁴⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, “1730,” 272, 292.

²⁴⁷ Steve Baker, “What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?,” in *Representing Animals*, ed. Nigel Rothfels (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002), 74.

²⁴⁸ Hélène Cixous, “Coming to Writing,” in *Coming to Writing and Other Essays*, ed. and trans. Deborah Jenson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 10–11; quoted in Baker, “What Does Becoming-Animal Look Like?,” 75.

²⁴⁹ Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 227–228.

“female” does not guarantee one’s attraction of a man, nor does a “male” physical appearance guarantee one’s attraction to a woman. This argument corresponds to the permanent state of flux within the rhizome. If intensities never intersect in exactly the same manner, making each displacement from identity unique, it would follow that the end of each becoming results in a slightly new identity than the one the individual possessed before the becoming. While the individual’s outward appearance might remain seemingly unchanged, his or her inner identity is not guaranteed to correspond.

By extension, could this rule of no guarantees apply to species categories, such as “human,” “animal,” and human-animal hybrid? By becoming animal, the individual lives outside identity, like the queer. Not only would this state fail to determine the object of one’s desire, it would also preclude—at least temporarily—the possibility of heteronormative reproductive futurity. The detachment from identity involved in a becoming also recalls Edelman’s deployment of *jouissance* and the death drive. In the first aspect of the death drive, the child (as idea) “enact[s] a logic of repetition that fixes identity through identification with the future of the social order.”²⁵⁰ Because becoming-animal unravels identity itself, this identification and the repetition that effects it are undone. Since the second aspect of the death drive “dissolves such fetishistic investments [as futurity]” and is “bound up with...the queer,”²⁵¹ it would follow that becoming-animal is also queer.

This explanation helps to shed light on the queerness of *Les Pâtés de Sable*. Although the back of Julie’s dress assumes the appearance of tail feathers and a wing-like pattern seems to emerge from her back, she does not physically transform from human to

²⁵⁰ Edelman, *No Future*, 25.

²⁵¹ Edelman, *No Future*, 25–26.

animal. Even the avian shape that hovers in front of her remains separate from her body. Rather, these forms may be interpreted as a symbolic method of picturing a process that, in reality, cannot be seen. Julie becomes-bird as she engages in a simple sculpting process—sifting sand, mixing it with water, and modeling the material into forms that resemble pies. The act of creating something new, as well as her undivided attention to the act of creation, brings about a temporary displacement of her identity as a human. Although the historical record shows that Julie would marry at the age of twenty-one and eventually have three sons,²⁵² nothing in the moment her mother captured on canvas in 1882 ensures such a future. In a world of short-lived and constantly fluctuating plateaus, no identity or existence outside of identity is permanent. At the given moment depicted in *Les Pâtés de Sable*, the experience of becoming-bird could destabilize any promise of Julie's heteronormative reproductive futurity.

One question remains for *Les Pâtés de Sable*: Why does Julie become bird and not another animal? Unlike the opposable thumbs of primates, the talons of birds are not capable of the act of grasping, which is necessary for most of the steps in the creation of sand pies. While, as Deleuze and Guattari remind us, anything can bring about a becoming, some speculative reasons should be explored. On a scientific level, Julie's lightweight clothing and the thriving vegetation in the background suggest that Morisot produced the painting during the late spring or summer months, a time when birds build nests, lay eggs, and nurture their offspring. Their presence or vocalizations could have influenced the intersection between human and avian intensities. Specific species, such as sand martins, are known for constructing nests by burrowing into sandy riverbanks or

²⁵² Rosalind de Boland Roberts and Jane Roberts, "Envoi," in *Growing up with the Impressionists: The Diary of Julie Manet* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1987), 190.

outcroppings, an act that a human could mimic by digging in the sand.²⁵³ Considering the theoretical connection of *Les Pâtés de Sable* with the death drive, the use of earth as a home for newly hatched chicks and a final resting place for deceased human bodies offers an interesting narrative between the two species concerning the cycle of life. In a community like Bougival, located on the River Seine, the presence of sand martins or a similar avian species could have inadvertently brought about a becoming-bird.

Deleuze and Guattari draw a parallel between birds and themes of death in musical compositions “[b]ecause of the ‘danger’ inherent in any line that escapes, in any line of flight or creative deterritorialization: the danger of veering toward destruction, toward abolition.”²⁵⁴ To be removed from one’s identity is to “escape,” as a bird flying from its cage, and to imperil one’s existence by venturing into an unknown realm. While Julie would eventually learn to play the piano, the mandolin, and the violin,²⁵⁵ Morisot makes no implication of music in this painting. However, her “tail feathers” form a fan shape that avian tail feathers assume while the bird is in flight. It is as if Julie has taken flight on a molecular level, taking the ultimate risk in the name of creativity.²⁵⁶ The “wings” that emanate from her back appear angelic, as if they could allow her to travel from the physical plane (the realm of the living) to the heavenly plane (the realm of the deceased in the Christian tradition). On a philosophical level, as well as a psychoanalytic one, *Les Pâtés de Sable* evokes the theme of mortality.

²⁵³ “Sand Martin Videos, News and Facts,” *BBC Nature*, 2016, http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/life/Sand_Martin.

²⁵⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, “1730,” 299.

²⁵⁵ Roberts and Roberts, “Introduction,” in *Growing up with the Impressionists*, 22–23.

²⁵⁶ Arguably, the avian form that hovers in front of Julie could be the next phase of her becoming, or it could be a precursor to the merging of the human and avian plateaus. This topic will be explored further in future research.

Not so Innocent: The Child and the Animal

From the late nineteenth-century to present day, the issue of desire elicited by child subjects has received much attention from feminist and queer theorists.²⁵⁷ This section, on the other hand, addresses the role of the animal in seemingly precocious demonstrations of sexuality in children. Cassatt's early Impressionist painting *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* (1878)²⁵⁸ (fig. 10) depicts the young daughter of a friend of Degas²⁵⁹ slouching in an armchair that matches the dominant blue décor of the sitting room in which she poses. The position in which she sits defies the normative behavior of a bourgeois lady. Whereas girls undergoing normalization were trained to sit with their backs erect, arms by their sides or folded in their laps, and legs together, as young Odile Fèvre mostly does in Cassatt's *Woman and Child Driving*²⁶⁰ (fig. 11), the child in *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* drapes one arm over a throw pillow, rests the other behind her head, and sits with her legs spread apart.

When analyzing *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair*, late twentieth-century scholars have drawn the reader's attention to the erotic suggestions of the girl's pose. On this level, Pollock describes the painting as "one of the most radical images of childhood

²⁵⁷ Harriet Scott Chessman, "Mary Cassatt and the Maternal Body," in *American Iconology: New Approaches to Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature*, ed. David C. Miller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Higonnet, *Pictures of Innocence*; Kincaid, "Producing Erotic Children"; Linda Nochlin, *Representing Women* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999); Stockton, *The Queer Child*.

²⁵⁸ Cassatt, *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair*, 1878, oil on canvas, 88 x 128.5cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

²⁵⁹ The existing scholarship does not note the child's proper name.

²⁶⁰ Cassatt, *Woman and Child Driving*, 1881, oil on canvas, 89.69 x 130.49cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art.

painted at this period.”²⁶¹ Likening the girl's pose to that of an “odalisque,” Harriet Scott Chessman argues that the painting “prefigures the child's mature sexuality ...” and places her in the role of the object of the heteronormative male gaze. She then points out the V shapes formed by the girl's legs and by “the room's brown space.” The former, she argues, “seem[s] disturbingly inviting to the eye,” while the latter “asks us to enter.”²⁶² In other words, according to Chessman, the manner in which the girl slouches elicits desire on the part of the viewer. While a twenty-first-century reader might find Chessman's words troubling, Linda Nochlin points out that, in the late nineteenth century, children's bodies were perceived as “simultaneously pure *and* desirable.” Citing Cassatt's paintings and prints of children and Lewis Carroll's photograph of a provocatively posed Evelyn Maud Hatch (1879), Nochlin notes the sitters' “cooperative mothers [who] seem to have felt quite at ease with the child-nude.”²⁶³ While Baudelaire's quote destabilizes the notion of innocence by illuminating the presence of sexual desire in children, Nochlin's information underscores the adult desire for a past that never existed seemingly embodied within the living child.

The desirable child extends from fine art and photography to contemporary advertisements. Higonnet points out the ubiquity of turn-of-the-century soap advertisements depicting “innocent” yet desirable children who overshadow the product. For example, Jessie Willcox Smith's advertisement for Ivory Soap (1902) (fig. 12) focuses on the child washing her hands while the bar of soap remains hidden from the

²⁶¹ Pollock, *Mary Cassatt*, 129.

²⁶² Chessman, “Mary Cassatt and the Maternal Body,” 250.

²⁶³ Nochlin, *Representing Women*, 203–204. Italics are Nochlin's.

viewer. The only references to the product are the bubbles that appear in the borders on either side of the advertisement:

Neither the face nor the soap matter; what matters is that an innocent, metaphorically clean, child uses the soap... The child is the prime object of our looking, but the desire we might feel is diffused into her surroundings. Lest there be any doubt in our minds, the picture is bordered with soap bubbles blown from pipes. The innocent child...is like a soap bubble: all beautiful surface, shimmering and empty. Do not touch.²⁶⁴

Despite Smith's emphasis on the child, the angle of the child's head reveals only outlines and contour lines of her facial features as she directs her attention toward the was basin, apparently unaware of the viewer's scrutiny. Meanwhile, as she leans forward, her white skirt lifts to reveal slightly exposed upper thighs that her black stockings fail to cover. However, the message of purity, implied by the soap bubbles and Ivory's famous slogan "99 and 44/100 Percent Pure [*sic*],"²⁶⁵ directs the viewer's attention to the combined innocence and desirability of the child as well as to the product. Such a combination substantiates Nochlin's argument regarding the child's body during Cassatt's lifetime.

While Smith's advertisement dates to the United States of the early twentieth century, European soap manufacturers were deploying similar techniques combining innocence and desirability during the final decades of the nineteenth century. Émile Munier's *Sugar and Spice* (1879)²⁶⁶ (fig. 13), used as an advertisement for Pears' Soap, depicts a provocatively posed young girl wearing a white nightshirt in a high chair equipped with pillows that act as a seat cushion and back support. The chair has been turned away from a dining table filled with indicators of a recently completed meal. As

²⁶⁴ Higonet, *Pictures of Innocence*, 62.

²⁶⁵ "Birth of an Icon: IVORY," blog, *P&G News*, (November 5, 2012), <http://news.pg.com/blog/heritage/birth-icon-ivory>.

²⁶⁶ Émile Munier, *Sugar and Spice* from the *Pears' Annual*, 1879, oil on canvas, [dimensions not found], private collection.

the girl lifts her left hand to her face, she inadvertently pushes one of the pillows toward the table, knocking a soup bowl on its side and spilling its contents into a saucer. A nearby spoon has been pushed haphazardly to the edge of the table. Behind the bowl stands a bucket of bosc pears, noted for their sweetness earlier in the ripening process than other varieties.²⁶⁷ On the other end of the table sit a tray of sliced cake, an empty drinking glass, and a nearly empty carafe of water.

The white of the girl's nightshirt, the dwarfed scale of her body relative to the chair, and association of a soap brand commonly advertised as deep-cleaning²⁶⁸ would indicate a state of purity and innocence. Simultaneously, the recently used elements in their current state of disarray evoke comparisons to broken pitchers often deployed in eighteenth-century iconography to signify lost virginity. When considered with the girl's pose, flirtatious countenance, and the early maturity of the pears, the still-life arrangement on the table completes the context of the child as a desirable—if not desiring—being. Whereas Smith's Ivory Soap advertisement depicts soap bubbles to compensate for the missing bar of soap, Munier merely uses a specific variety of pear to indicate the brand name of the advertised product. Without the text "Pears' Soap" in large font at the top center of the frame, the painting shifts from advertisement to genre scene.

In the soap advertisements designed by Smith and Munier, the absence of the animal establishes the desirable child as the norm without a non-human ally. This lack of a parallel between human sexuality and animality allows the child to prepare for its

²⁶⁷ S. R. Jaeger et al., "In Search of the 'Ideal' Pear (*pyrus* Spp.): Results of a Multidisciplinary Exploration," *Journal of Food Science* 68, no. 3 (April 2003): 1112.

²⁶⁸ A contemporary advertisement for Pears' Soap depicts a Black child, having bathed with the soap in the "before" picture, with white skin from the chest down in the "after" picture. Produced during the rapid expansion of the British Empire, the advertisement conveys Pears' Soap deep-cleaning and "civilizing" potential.

(human) heteronormative teleology. However, neither Smith's nor Munier's model appears to have reached the age of puberty, leaving both children in a state of prepubescent sterility, which, in the immediate moment, destabilizes the hope of reproductive futurity. Such a paradox is a stark reminder of Stockton's assertion that all children are "from the standpoint of 'normal' adults...always queer."²⁶⁹ Viewing children as Locke's blank slates, "normal" adults perceive their younger counterparts as lacking the promise of futurity. Children's experiences and personal desires during their formative years could either ensure their conformity to the heteronormative "ideal" or create non-normative insurgents who will only contribute to the death drive.

Given the appeal to adult desire for the child's body in advertising, the eschewing of innocence, by itself, in *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* is hardly queer. The artist's inclusion of a dog identified as Cassatt's Belgian Griffon Baptiste,²⁷⁰ asleep on the chair opposite the girl, deserves attention. This painting is not the first portrait of a provocatively posed child accompanied by an animal. Sixty years earlier, Théodore Géricault painted *Portrait of Louise Vernet as a Child* (c. 1818)²⁷¹ (fig. 14), which depicts a young girl who tilts her head to the side, casting a "come hither" expression toward the viewer. Simultaneously, she flirtatiously bares her right shoulder and right knee from a loose-fitting dress as she drapes her left arm over a large cat whose stern

²⁶⁹ Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 7.

²⁷⁰ Kimberly Jones, "Introduction to the Exhibition: 'Degas/Cassatt'" (Lecture, "Degas/Cassatt" special exhibition, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, May 11, 2014), <http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/audio-video/audio/degas-cassatt-jones.html>. Baptiste's role in the girl's shunning of her heteronormative teleology will be discussed in the next chapter. This chapter will focus on her acknowledgement of prepubescent sexual urges and the significance of the animal in that context.

²⁷¹ Théodore Géricault, *Louise Vernet as a Child*, c. 1818, oil on canvas, 600 x 500 cm, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

facial expression appears nearly human. Higonet argues that such portraits of children and “absurdly large” companion animals “[cue]...the viewer’s projection of his or her adult self into the image as the child’s protector.”²⁷² In the case of Géricault’s portrait, one such viewer was likely the sitter’s father, with whom the artist was acquainted.²⁷³ The cat’s location on the girl’s lap evokes images of a fearsome patriarch guarding his daughter’s virginity. However, in terms of iconography, cats specifically conjured images contrary to the notion of innocence. Associated with religious transgression during the Middle Ages, cats attained sexual connotations, such as seduction, by the eighteenth century.²⁷⁴ While Vernet may conform to the standards of the relationship between the presumed heteronormative male viewer and the passive female sitter, and her feline companion may underscore her coquetry, the animal also warns the viewer that the child’s virtue is vigilantly protected.

Vernet was approximately five years of age when Géricault painted her portrait.²⁷⁵ Coincidentally, Greg Thomas estimates Cassatt’s model to be approximately five years old as well.²⁷⁶ It is at this age that Freud notes a theory of an “early efflorescence” of sexual impulses that emerges temporarily and subsequently ebbs, re-entering a period of dormancy until the onset of puberty. He bases this hypothesis on “the anatomical

²⁷² Higonet, *Pictures of Innocence*, 34.

²⁷³ Anja Grebe, “Théodore Géricault: Portrait of Louise Vernet as a Child,” in *The Louvre: All the Paintings*, ed. Vincent Pomarède (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal, 2011), 70.

²⁷⁴ Sarah P. Hanson, “Goddess, Hunter, Consort, Thief,” *ARTNews*, June 1, 2007, <http://www.artnews.com/2007/06/01/goddess-hunter-consort-thief/>.

²⁷⁵ “Théodore Géricault: Louise Vernet, enfant,” *Atlas Database of Exhibits: Musée du Louvre*, accessed December 25, 2015, http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=15358. The information in the database places Vernet between four and five years old. (“C’est l’enfant de quatre ou cinq ans...”)

²⁷⁶ Greg Thomas, *Impressionist Children*, 80.

investigation of the internal genitalia.” Noting that *Homo sapiens* are the only species to experience a second sexual dormancy period,²⁷⁷ he then proceeds to speculate whether temporary childhood sexuality is an evolutionary vestige from “a species of animal which reached sexual maturity in five years.”²⁷⁸ This theory complicates the concept of childhood innocence while historically contextualizing the provocative poses in both models.

In addition to Cassatt’s predecessors who deployed animals to bring nuance to the concept of childhood innocence, selected contemporary advertisements used companion animals to strengthen the notion, as well as to support the heteronormative teleology of childhood. Munier’s *His Turn Next* (c. 1891)²⁷⁹ (fig. 15), also used as a Pears’ Soap advertisement, depicts a young girl in a white nightshirt, holding a puppy in her right arm while a naked young boy bathing in a tub filled with soapy water extends his arms toward the puppy, indicating his desire for the animal to bathe with him. Unlike *Sugar and Spice*, this advertisement includes the bar of soap, albeit in a subordinated location on the floor near the girl’s right foot. While the children’s naked and scantily clad appearances could have evoked a sense of desirability in the nineteenth-century viewer, their objectified status is de-emphasized in favor of their burgeoning sense of responsibility during their normalization. In *His Turn Next*, both the children and the puppy exist in a state of nature. However, just as the canine species was domesticated as a companion to humans,

²⁷⁷ A possible reason—based on Freud’s theories regarding human evolution—will be explored in the next chapter.

²⁷⁸ Sigmund Freud, *The Origins of Religion: Totem and Taboo, Moses and Monotheism, and Other Works*, ed. James Strachey and Albert Dickson, trans. James Strachey (London: Penguin Books, 1985), 317–318.

²⁷⁹ Émile Munier, *His Turn Next* from the *Pears’ Annual*, 1891, oil on canvas, [dimensions not found], private collection.

the children in this advertisement will be “domesticated” as heteronormatively reproducing adults. As this process unfolds, regular bathing with Pears’ Soap will aid in the normalization process, emphasizing the importance of cleanliness in attracting mates of the opposite sex. In other words, the dog serves as a normative symbol for the teleology of childhood.

How, then, does *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* compare to the paintings produced by Géricault and Munier? What makes Cassatt’s painting queer in relation to those of her predecessors and contemporaries? Unlike Vernet’s cat, Baptiste does not rest on the body of Cassatt’s model. Rather, he sleeps nonchalantly on the opposite side of the canvas, apparently unconcerned with the girl’s virtue. The young female sitter in each painting exhibits contrasting body language, as well. While both girls sit in a manner unbecoming of a bourgeois lady, Cassatt’s sitter does not flirt with the viewer. Instead, she directs her dissatisfied gaze toward Baptiste, as if she feels envious of his non-human status.²⁸⁰ A detail of the girl’s face shows her clean skin, coiffed hair, and evidence of mascara and lip color. However, unlike Munier’s young models, whose bathing with their dog suggests the promise of “domestication” as they approach adulthood, Cassatt’s sitter’s physical preparation for the scrutiny of her parents’ social circle does not guarantee emotional or psychological conformity to the expected teleology. At this stage of her development, she appears to demonstrate active resistance. Unlike Vernet and Munier’s models, the actions of Cassatt’s model place her role in heteronormative reproduction into question.

²⁸⁰ The issue of the child’s envy regarding the animal’s freedom from heteronormative expectations will be explored in the next chapter.

Conclusion

While Stockton argues that innocence queers actual living children, artworks with queer approaches often conflict with innocence, as well. Presented as a simple, straightforward concept in the popular imagination, childhood innocence, once analyzed, unravels as a convoluted paradox. The innocent (or “Romantic”) child exists apart from the world of adults, blissfully ignorant of matters of gender and sexuality. However, an existence apart from adults is an existence apart from culture—that is, an existence solely in the realm of nature, in communion with non-human animals. Animal species, most with shorter lifespans than humans, reach sexual maturity comparatively early and do not suppress their urges. How, then, can a child be truly “innocent” while embodying the very carefree sexuality to which it is supposed to be oblivious?

Because the “innocent” child is asexual and without gender, it fails to fulfill the heteronormative teleology to which adults expect it to eventually conform. As the symbol of the future and the promise of the continuation of the human species, the child must be acknowledged as a sexual being to comply with the “life instinct,” or Eros. To remove the child’s gender and sexuality is to associate it with the death drive, which counteracts reproductive futurity, thus queering the child. However, removed from the world of adult concerns, the “innocent” child—in theory—remains oblivious to matters of death. Bringing the child into contact with death thus contradicts innocence and heteronormativity simultaneously. On the other hand, counteracting death with Eros also contradicts innocence while preserving the promise of reproductive futurity. Viewed another way, lacking a sense of sexuality, the innocent child is a queer child.

Common artistic devices deployed for the innocent child include existence in nature, oversized clothing, temporal displacement through outdated clothing or background elements, and interaction with non-human animals. However, as Cassatt demonstrates in *Ellen Mary Cassatt in a White Coat* and *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* and as Morisot demonstrates in *Les Pâtés de Sable*, these devices may also be deployed to produce a queer depiction of childhood. Existence in nature traditionally removes the innocent child from the realm of culture governed by adults. However, the contexts of the death drive and becoming-animal in Morisot's painting counteract both innocence and heteronormativity by acknowledging a child's awareness of "adult" matters and destabilizing the promise of reproductive futurity. Oversized clothing makes children appear "cute" while masking sexual difference. By placing her cocooned niece in a large chair that forces an awkward pose, Cassatt offers a critique of this sartorial practice. Just as her model in *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* refuses to hide her sexual awareness, the artist's niece displays discomfort over having to conceal hers. While matters of childhood sexuality in *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* would seem to conform to matters of normativity, the child's resistance in her alliance with the artist's dog runs counter to matters of reproductive futurity in humans.

In total, the selected artworks in this chapter demonstrate the problematic nature of childhood innocence with fact and reason. Additionally, innocence is not necessarily a polar opposite of normativity or queerness. Childhood innocence is not only the result of nostalgic adults "looking back" to a misremembered past, but it also makes children as they actually are—in their "natural" state, so to speak—appear strange or queer. One crucial lesson learned from *Ellen Mary Cassatt in a White Coat*, *Les Pâtés de Sable*, and

Little Girl in a Blue Armchair is that, although these paintings are queer in relation to established norms, the real strangeness lies with the adults who establish the norms. We must, therefore, read and analyze historical artifacts that cast childhood as a time of blissful “innocence” in a more critical manner.

FIGURES FOR CHAPTER TWO

Figure 1 Sir Joshua Reynolds. *The Age of Innocence*. 1788. Oil on canvas. 76.5 x 63.8cm. Tate Britain, London.

Figure 2 Mary Cassatt. *Ellen Mary Cassatt in a White Coat*. 1896. Oil on canvas. 81.28 x 60.33cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 3 Mary Cassatt. *Elsie in a Blue Armchair*. 1880. Pastel on paper. 88.9 x 63.5cm. Private collection.

Figure 4 Mary Cassatt. *In the Omnibus*. 1890-91. Dry point and aquatint on laid paper. 43 x 29.8cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

Figure 5 Pierre-Auguste Renoir. *White Pierrot*. 1901-02. Oil on canvas. 79.1 x 61.9cm. Detroit Institute of Arts.

Figure 6 Berthe Morisot. *Les Pâtés de Sable* (*Sand Pies*). 1882. Oil on canvas. 92 x 73cm. Private collection.

Figure 7 Berthe Morisot. *Les Pâtés de Sable* (annotated). Black boxes denote “wings” (left) and “bird” (right).

Figure 8 Édouard Manet. *Music in the Tuileries Gardens*. 1862. Oil on canvas. 76.2 x 118.1cm. National Gallery of Art, London.

Figure 9 Edward Hicks. *The Peaceable Kingdom*. 1834. Oil on canvas. 74.5 x 90.1cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

Figure 10 Mary Cassatt. *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair*. 1878. Oil on canvas. 88 x 128.5cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

Figure 11 Mary Cassatt. *Woman and Child Driving*. 1881. Oil on canvas. 89.69 x 130.49cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Figure 12 Jessie Willcox Smith. Advertisement for Ivory Soap. 1902.

Figure 13 Émile Munier. *Sugar and Spice* from the *Pears' Annual*. 1879. Oil on canvas. [Dimensions not found]. Private collection.

Figure 14 Théodore Géricault. *Louise Vernet as a Child*. c. 1818. Oil on canvas. 600 x 500 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Figure 15 Émile Munier. *His Turn Next* from the *Pears' Annual*. c. 1891. Oil on canvas. [Dimensions not found]. Private collection.

CHAPTER THREE:
NORMALIZATION AND ITS DISRUPTIONS, PART I:
RITUAL, READING, AND RESISTANCE

For centuries, conventional wisdom convinced men and women that biology was destiny. Women, with anatomical and hormonal attributes that endowed them with the ability to become pregnant and give birth, were “destined” to be no more than wives and mothers. Men, on the other hand, possessed the biological makeup to impregnate women and thereafter assume small to non-existent roles in the lives of their children. As such, they were free to compete against one another in the name of career advancement and enjoy comparatively freer lives vis-à-vis their female counterparts. The terms “sex” and “gender” were used interchangeably, as women and men “naturally” possessed “feminine” and “masculine” attributes, respectively. By the mid twentieth century, however, the writings of Simone de Beauvoir and Margaret Mead had begun to alter the conventional wisdom by differentiating sex from gender, defining the former as the result of biology and the latter as the result of socio-cultural construction. Individuals are born either male or female, as determined by their genitals. However, cultures and societies determine whether behavior, clothing, colors, interests, and the like are masculine or

feminine. Men, for example, are not inherently competitive, nor are women inherently nurturing.²⁸¹ Such characteristics, as well as the desired telos of bourgeois children did not come about through biology but rather through sociocultural conditioning. A combination of forces, including caregivers and consumer culture, normalize young boys and girls so that they accept these constructed notions as natural truths, beginning early in children's lives to ensure the long-term success of this acceptance. From that point forward, as Butler famously notes, individuals and society as a whole must consistently repeat established norms to perpetuate their control. Any form of deviation or disruption poses a threat to the stability of the system.²⁸² As this chapter will reveal, despite concerted attempts to maintain a state of normalcy—or, better yet, normalization—through the enforcement of classificatory boundaries, potential destabilizing agents abounded in late nineteenth century Western culture.

This chapter will deploy the queer theories of Butler and Stockton, as well as the psychoanalytic theories of the Freudian and Lacanian schools, to reveal how Cassatt and Morisot capture and destabilize gender normalization through domestic rituals and pedagogical pursuits like reading. In most cases, what initially appears normative simultaneously may be read as queer. Additionally, this chapter will revisit the role of

²⁸¹ Beauvoir asserts that “[n]o biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society; it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature...which is described as feminine.” See *The Second Sex*, trans. H.M. Parshley (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 267; Mead's observations of indigenous cultures in the South Pacific found several instances of a reversal of Western concepts of gender roles, such as aggression in women and passivity in men, leading her to the following conclusion: “...we no longer have any basis for regarding such aspects of behavior as sex-linked.” See *Sex and Temperament: In Three Primitive Societies* (New York: William Morrow, 1935), 279.

²⁸² Monique Wittig, “One Is Not Born a Woman,” in *The Gay and Lesbian Studies Reader*, ed. Henry Abelove, Michèle Aina Barale, and David M. Halperin (New York: Routledge, 1993), 307–320.

animals in the artists' oeuvres. This chapter will draw upon the theories of Stockton, Deleuze and Guattari, as well as psychoanalytic and evolutionary theories to examine the animal's role of the child's ally in his or her resistance to normative teleologies, as seen in the work of Cassatt. The role of the animal as a threat to normativity will also be examined in one of Morisot's portraits of Julie reading. Having read Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species* (French translation published 1862) before her marriage,²⁸³ Morisot had knowledge of the English naturalist's theory of human evolution and, based on her correspondence, was concerned about the regressive consequences of reading the "wrong" books. Where necessary, evolutionary theories, especially those formulated by Darwin and Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, will attempt to fill any gaps.

Cassatt's Exposure of Gender Normalization

Butler's scholarship also extends to the realm of children, notably in her discussion of performative speech, "statements that, in uttering, also perform a certain action and exercise a binding power."²⁸⁴ She uses an obstetrician's declaration of a newborn baby's sex as a performative act. In other words, by declaring whether a baby is male or female, the physician, not biology, makes the baby's sex "so."²⁸⁵ Therefore, according to Butler, sex is social construction, rather than a biological determination. When an obstetrician or a midwife announces whether a newborn is a "girl" or a "boy," he or she has performed a speech act that will determine the child's path of identity

²⁸³ Morisot, undated letter to Edma Pontillon, c. 1873-1874, in *Berthe Morisot: The Correspondence*, 90.

²⁸⁴ Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 225.

²⁸⁵ Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, 232.

formation for the remainder of its life.²⁸⁶ Based on the physician's or midwife's announcement, the child's parents or guardians often work to normalize their child's appearance through fashion and hairstyles. Children, as noted by Lee Edelman, represent futurity, an objective that ultimately takes precedence over children themselves.²⁸⁷ This futurity is partly responsible for the emphasis on intelligible, performed gender because it aids in heterosexual attraction, which, it is hoped, will result in reproduction, beginning the cycle anew. While many late nineteenth-century artists such as Renoir depict moments of idealized heteronormative childhood,²⁸⁸ Cassatt's oeuvre, as the following pages will demonstrate, captures pre-normalized children, as well as those who are traumatized by or resistant to efforts toward normalization, along with those who seemingly conform to normative expectations while simultaneously suggesting a sense of discomfort.

Cassatt's *Two Children at the Seashore* (1885)²⁸⁹ (fig. 1) depicts two children of indeterminate gender shoveling sand into their buckets. Their rather revealing and lightweight clothing, which denotes warm weather, exposes their skin to the sun, resulting in the sunburn visible on their arms and cheeks. Unlike his or her companion, the child seated closer to the audience does not wear a hat, exposing his or her hair to the wind, which has blown a tress out of place. Just as the children deviate from the norm of

²⁸⁶ Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, 232.

²⁸⁷ Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 10–11.

²⁸⁸ Greg M. Thomas, *Impressionist Children: Childhood, Family, and Modern Identity in French Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 41–53. Thomas pays especially close attention to Renoir's commodification of bourgeois girlhood, arguing that the Impressionist artist emphasized his young sitters' future sexual potential while simultaneously rendering their appearances doll-like.

²⁸⁹ Cassatt, *Two Children at the Seashore*, 1884–85, oil on canvas, 97.47 x 74.29cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

protecting their skin from the sun, they also defy the convention of placing a blanket between themselves and the ground, opting to sit directly on the sand, a decision that will eventually soil their clothing and cause discomfort as their sweat causes individual grains to stick to their skin. This chapter will analyze *Two Children at the Seashore* as a representation of the state in which normalization is still at its early stage.²⁹⁰

As Thomas notes in his formal analysis of this painting, the children sit in a space devoid of adult activity, with the exception of the yachts on the water in the background.²⁹¹ While this sense of isolation could arguably place the children in a mythical state of innocence, it also signifies the absence of adult supervision and, thus, an absence of normalizing forces. The children's apparent obliviousness to their reddening skin and eventual untidy state suggest a certain disregard for normalization. This sense of carefree play in a public place is unique in Cassatt's oeuvre. Pollock and Thomas are two of many scholars who have noted an obvious sense of self-consciousness in Cassatt's depictions of young girls, adolescents, and adult women as they acknowledge the scrutiny to which they are subjected outside the domestic sphere.²⁹² Even without scholarly intervention, the audience can see the suggestions of self-consciousness on Cassatt's sister Lydia and Odile Fèvre, Degas's niece, in *Woman and Child Driving* (1881).²⁹³ (fig.

²⁹⁰ Chapter Four will examine the effects of sand, sweat, sun, and wind ("side effects" of playtime) on the outward appearance of children who were expected to perform their class status in the panopticon of the urban spectacle.

²⁹¹ Greg Thomas, *Impressionist Children*, 60.

²⁹² Griselda Pollock, "Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity," in *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and the History of Art* (London: Routledge, 1988), 75–79; Griselda Pollock, *Mary Cassatt: Painter of Modern Women* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 145–146; Thomas, *Impressionist Children*, 148–150.

²⁹³ Cassatt, *Woman and Child Driving*, 1881, oil on canvas, 89.69 x 130.49cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art.

2) The female sitters in this painting share erect postures, serious facial expressions, and conscious efforts to avoid returning the gazes of strangers.

Woman and Child Driving takes place in the Bois de Boulogne,²⁹⁴ a popular location for promenades among the bourgeoisie in Haussmannized Paris. As Lydia grabs the riding crop and the reins of the horse pulling her carriage, she clutches her arms to her sides, positions her hands toward the center of her torso, plants her feet firmly on the floor and holds her knees together. Fèvre, with her hands free, copies Lydia's stiff posture but holds her arms in a slightly more open form than her adult companion. Her right arm is positioned almost immediately beside her body as if she has placed her hand on the seat, while her left arm extends at a more pronounced angle toward the armrest as she steadies herself. In other words, Lydia performs the closed form of normative femininity, occupying minimal space and marking her body as private. Fèvre, as a young girl in the process of normalization, has already learned to maintain closed form on her lower body and will soon learn to likewise on her upper body. Even at her young age, she appears aware of her status as an object of the urban panopticon.²⁹⁵

The self-conscious acknowledgement of constant scrutiny in the public sphere seen in *Woman and Child Driving* is absent on the toddlers in *Two Children at the Seashore*, suggesting a "natural" state of childhood that exists before normalization. The lack of intelligible gender on either of the children underscores this early stage of development. Whether the children are girls or boys, normalization will bring the performance of the gender and class they were assigned at birth. The process of

²⁹⁴ Greg Thomas, *Impressionist Children*, 148.

²⁹⁵ See Chapter Two for a brief contrast between Fèvre's pose and that of Cassatt's unidentified sitter in *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* (1878).

normalization takes many forms with parents, domestic staff, extended family, and even consumer culture playing critical roles. If we were to conceptualize the paintings and print discussed thus far in this section as a chronology of gender formation in the bourgeoisie, we would need a work to act as a bridge between *Two Children at the Seashore* and the three depictions of incomplete normalization, adolescence, and motherhood, respectively. Midway through the first decade of the twentieth century, Cassatt would produce a painting that not only links *Two Children at the Seashore* to the other paintings but also exposes gender as a social construct.

Because normalized gender identity is supposed to be accepted as a biological truth,²⁹⁶ conventions dictate that the process take place early in life so that it will not be remembered later. However, Cassatt disrupts this norm by recording a normalization ritual in *Mother and Child (Mother Wearing a Sunflower on Her Dress)* (1905),²⁹⁷ (fig. 3) whose naked young sitter, with her obscured genitals, is a visual metaphor of John Locke's *tabula rasa*. She sits on her mother's lap, gazing into a hand-held mirror while a larger wall-mounted mirror reflects the complete scene. As the agent of normalization, her mother steadies the girl's body with her left hand, as if training her to sit in the "proper" upright position for a lady, and uses her right hand to help her hold the hand mirror.

The mirrors play a crucial role in the process of normalization, allowing the girl to inspect her own appearance at close range with the hand mirror while simultaneously viewing her mother's performance of heteronormative femininity behind her. Pollock

²⁹⁶ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 178.

²⁹⁷ Cassatt, *Mother and Child (Mother Wearing a Sunflower on Her Dress)*, 1905, oil on canvas, 92.1 x 73.7cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

draws a point of contrast between the child as blank slate and the mother who “signals a social destiny and a socially privileged femininity.”²⁹⁸ As the child takes in this view of a woman who bears a resemblance to her yet is noticeably older, she occupies the present, in which she is still a formative toddler, and the future, in which she will adopt her mother’s mannerisms and repeat this very process with her own daughter, at once. The wall mirror appears to reflect this temporal collision with the absence of facial features on the girl’s face and simultaneous presence of her mother’s right eye, right ear, and mouth—despite the girl’s slightly nearer position to the mirror (fig. 4). It is as if the mirror were waiting for time and her normalization to reach a stable point worthy of an intelligible reflection. In other words, the normalization we witness not only visually describes a key component of Butler’s theoretical framework but also displays the concept of queer temporalities, in which linear time collapses, allowing, from the girl’s point of view, the present and the future to meet in a single space. In fact, the thicker brushstrokes that signify out-of-place tresses in the back of the girl’s head bear a striking resemblance to the petals on her mother’s sunflower. It is as if the girl’s transformation into her future self is unfolding before us.

The child, who appears multiple times as a physical fact and as a reflection, is only one element of the composition that complicates the dynamics of the gaze. Her contemplation of her reflection produces multiple levels of her objectification as her mother occupies the primary role as the individual who looks. While her hand mirror allows her to inspect the details of her face, the larger mirror on the wall opposite her provides a half-body view. Perhaps as her gender formation continues, she will learn to

²⁹⁸ Pollock, *Mary Cassatt*, 210.

angle the hand mirror to interact with the larger mirror, allowing her to view her body from multiple perspectives at once.

Although this play of mirrors could serve as preparation for her daily toilette once she enters adulthood, this multifaceted self-inspection is also a form of the self-policing that occurs within panopticism. In the spectacle of the turn-of-the-century bourgeoisie, careful attention to one's performance was shared by both sexes. For girls and women, such self-policing seems timeless. John Berger notes that "a woman's self [is] split into two...[because] [s]he is almost continually accompanied by her own image of herself. ... From earliest childhood she has been taught and persuaded to survey herself continually."²⁹⁹ The nearly unending presence of one's own image and constant self-scrutiny would require continual possession of or access to a mirror. It would seem, according to Berger, that, although the mirror stage gives the individual a sense of completeness, constant exposure to one's reflection creates a sense of fragmentation. This complete and autonomous mirror image, initially perceived as the ideal and thus how the individual wants to be perceived by others. However, the ideal is merely a reflection with which the individual can never be in reality. For the constantly self-policing woman, this disappointing truth has more of an impact than it does with men. Her consciousness therefore splits between her actual self and the perceived ideal she can never be.

The directional lines formed by the sitters' arms and gazes draw the viewer's attention to a hand mirror, which focuses on the girl's face.³⁰⁰ According to several behavioral studies conducted during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the first

²⁹⁹ John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: British Broadcasting Company and Penguin Books, 1972), 46.

³⁰⁰ Pollock, *Mary Cassatt*, 210–211.

attribute that human beings tend to notice about one another and, thus, the part of the body initially judged for its beauty or lack thereof.³⁰¹ As Theodora Hermes points out, the mirror reflects only physical beauty, while the mind is neglected.³⁰² In this sense, the splitting of the self can transcend the conflict between reality and the unachievable ideal to manifest as a conflict between the body and the mind. At the formative moment in Cassatt's painting, the conflict is more pronounced. However, as the girl's normalization continues, she will be expected to yield to the commonly accepted dichotomy that assigned the mind to the domain of men and the body to the domain of women. Butler notes the "well documented" status of this gendered dualism within philosophical and feminist scholarship and argues that the dichotomy should be "rethought for the implicit gender hierarchy that the distinction has conventionally produced, maintained, and rationalized."³⁰³ In this vein, despite nineteenth-century discourse that framed women's normative roles as a form of equality,³⁰⁴ the mind/body dualism actually places women in an inferior social and political position. As a result, this dichotomy will convince the toddler in Cassatt's painting that she should only concern herself with her body, which will attract a husband. His role as protector and provider will place her and their children

³⁰¹ Alvin G. Goldstein was among the early scholars to remark on the significance of face recognition in human behavior. See "Behavioral Scientists' Fascination with Faces," *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior* 7, no. 4 (1983): 223–255. More recent observations appear in Eric Kandel, *The Age of Insight: The Quest to Understand the Unconscious in Art, Mind, and Brain, from Vienna 1900 to the Present* (New York: Random House, 2012), 288; and Olga V. Chelnokova et al., "Rewards of Beauty: The Opioid System Mediates Social Motivation in Humans," *Molecular Psychiatry* 19, no. 7 (2014): 746–747.

³⁰² Theodora Hermes, "Reflections in Contemporary Feminist Literature," *Valley Humanities Review*, Spring 2012.

³⁰³ Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 17.

³⁰⁴ See Chapter One, page 29, footnote 11.

in a state of dependency. To attract a husband and maintain his interest, she will need to develop a reliance on the mirror to ensure that she performs adequately.

Attracting a husband will also require the girl to pose no threat to his sense of masculinity. By emphasizing her face, the hand mirror effectively separates her head from her body in a metaphorical decapitation. Freud associates decapitation with castration and, thus, disempowerment.³⁰⁵ Nochlin expands upon the concept by emphasizing the sacrifice and the irreversibility of disempowerment suggested by the severing of the head.³⁰⁶ While the norms of early twentieth-century France would foreclose the girl's achievement of political power afforded to warrior of Freud's narrative or the monarch of Nochlin's, she could potentially foster her intelligence and creative talents through formal education. However, these assets would serve little purpose for bourgeois wives and mothers. Rather, intelligence and talent would primarily benefit women who chose to enter a small but growing number of respectable careers outside the home. For the upper middle-class French woman, entry into the public sphere was still controversial in the initial decades of the twentieth century.³⁰⁷ Therefore, Cassatt's young model must permanently sacrifice the powers of her mind in favor of physical attractiveness in order to maintain her respectability among the members of her class.

³⁰⁵ Freud, "Medusa's Head," in *Collected Papers*, trans. James Strachey, vol. 5 (London: Hogarth Press, 1950), 105.

³⁰⁶ Nochlin, *The Body in Pieces: The Fragment as a Metaphor of Modernity* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 11, 49, 51.

³⁰⁷ Michèle Plott, "The Rules of the Game: Respectability, Sexuality, and the Femme Mondaine in Late-Nineteenth-Century Paris," *French Historical Studies* 25, no. 3 (2002): 540.

While the normalization process is underway, it is not guaranteed to reach completion. Pollock's contrast between the child's nakedness and the mother's "feminine" attire calls attention to the presence of the mother's reflection in the child's field of vision. Through this dynamic, the mother merely represents the child's "*prospective femininity*" [my italics]. The fixity of the future is "questioned ... by its passage through the girl-child, in its nakedness outside the rules and costumes of the adult masquerade of fashionable femininity." Pollock interprets the child's reflection in the hand mirror as one of "perplexity," which underscores the mother's constructed appearance.³⁰⁸ The child plays the simultaneous roles of a blank slate and the "uncivilized" other governed by its own urges. If her facial expression is any indication, she could perceive the older woman's attire and ornamentation as strange and cannot discern why she (the mother) would want to reproduce that strangeness. Although the mother might intend to imprint the norms of bourgeois femininity on the child, the child holds the potential to disrupt that agenda.

The child's countenance further illuminates this lack of certainty regarding her future when analyzed from a disturbing approach. At this early stage of the girl's normalization, established codes of decorum are unfamiliar and perhaps unsettling to her. The detailed reflection of her face could be interpreted as one not so much of confusion but of apprehension, whose details cannot perceive at a distance. The use of flesh-toned paint to disrupt and partially erase the contours of the child's red lips underscores the child's uneasiness with language, as her mouth seems to appear and disappear simultaneously. Julia Kristeva identifies the development of language as the beginning of

³⁰⁸ Pollock, *Mary Cassatt*, 210–211.

its formation of an identity separate from the mother. This “speaking subject,” as Kristeva calls the child, is what Leon S. Roudiez calls the “split subject” due to its fluctuation between the Lacanian Symbolic order (the “masculine” realm of language) and the pre-Oedipal semiotic realm, in which the infant is attached to the mother.³⁰⁹ In other words, the simultaneous presence and absence of the mouth on Cassatt’s young sitter could be the result of this “split” state. This inability to raise a protest to the ritual to which she is subjected foreshadows future silencing by society in matters of all topics beyond the domestic sphere. In other words, this portrait not only disrupts the perceived naturalness of gender formation, but it also reveals the harrowing effects the process has on children it puts on display. Additionally, Cassatt’s use of mirrors and choice of colors on the child’s mouth raise questions regarding her young sitter’s psychic development.

Given the child’s young age and the shock she experiences during the normalization ritual, the question of how this process affects ego development must be addressed. All major psychoanalytic schools emphasize the importance of the child’s reconciling its internal world with external forces in the formation of a healthy ego. Failure to reconcile the two results in a weaker ego, which, in turn, weakens the individual’s sense of reason and maturity and warps his or her grasp on reality. In Lacanian psychoanalysis, ego formation begins with the mirror stage, which marks the child’s transition into the Imaginary order (the order of images) and prepares it for entry into the Symbolic order (the order of language).³¹⁰ The reconciliation of the internal with

³⁰⁹ Leon S. Roudiez, introduction to *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* by Julia Kristeva, trans. Thomas Gora and Alice A. Jardine (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 6-7.

³¹⁰ Vincent B. Leitch et al., eds., “Jacques Lacan, 1901-1981,” in *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, 2nd ed. (W. W. Norton: New York, 2010), 1159.

the external begins upon the initial perception of one's complete reflection in a full-length mirror. At this point, the child acknowledges its status as a complete being, separate from its mother's body. However, it is only through the reflection that the child can see a complete representation of its body, as perceiving one's own body as complete without the aid of a full-length mirror is impossible.³¹¹ Therefore, without the aid of the complete reflection, the child's ego formation is incomplete, and the child's relationship to reality is weak. How, then, might the mother's directing her daughter's attention to the smaller hand-held mirror affect the maturation of the child's ego? By extension, how might this incomplete reflection work in conjunction with the child's seemingly immobilized mouth to affect her entry into the Symbolic order?

Before the child realizes and accepts its bodily autonomy, it must progress through a "succession of phantasies that extends from a fragmented body-image to a form of its totality." Once the child has passed the mirror stage, its relationship with the external world begins the tireless, yet unfulfillable, task of trying to verify the ego. If this task, which continues over the course of a lifetime, faces "aggressive disintegration in the individual," the image of the fragmented body returns in dreams. In cases of hysteria, the fragmented body could surface "at the organic level."³¹² As the mother in Cassatt's painting directs her daughter's attention toward her more focused reflection in the hand mirror, does she inadvertently put the child at risk for regression to a perception of the fragmented body and, thus, a disruption in the development and function of the ego?

³¹¹ Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," in *Ecrits*, second edition of *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, eds. Vincent B. Leitch et. al. (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2010), 1163-1169.

³¹² Lacan, "The Mirror Stage," 1166-1167.

As discussed above, the splitting of the self that results from regular self-policing of one's body with a mirror can be seen as a form of fragmentation, a regression from the discovery made during the mirror stage. To see oneself as a complete autonomous being is to see oneself as a subject. Hermes cites as an example a scene from Toni Morrison's novel *Sula* (2011), in which one of the protagonists glimpses her reflection and, for the first time, sees herself in the first person, as opposed to as her parents' daughter.³¹³ It would follow that regression from this state of subjectivity would entail, at the very least, validating one's existence solely or primarily in relation to others—as someone's wife or mother, for example, which was the norm for upper middle-class women.³¹⁴ Normalizing a girl to exist through others, it would seem, would prompt her to see herself as others see her. In the teleology of heteronormative feminine childhood, the girl will adopt a self-image as an object of the heteronormative male gaze, in Pollock's words, "assum[ing] a masculine position or masochistically enjoy[ing] the sight of women's humiliation."³¹⁵

Psychic regression and fragmentation could also be related to the traumatized expression on the face of Cassatt's young model (fig. 5). Freudian psychoanalysis informs us that regression is deployed as a defense mechanism when the individual experiences anxiety, which the ego perceives as a threat to the self. Through regression, the individual's awareness of his or her anxiety is repressed.³¹⁶ Depending on how severe the individual perceives the experience that induced the anxiety, long-term mental illness

³¹³ Hermes, "Reflections in Contemporary Feminist Literature."

³¹⁴ Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1983), 310-337. Friedan admits that, as of the initial publication of her iconic book, no psychological studies had been conducted regarding the consequences of women's failure to self-actualize.

³¹⁵ Pollock, "Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity," 85.

³¹⁶ Freud, "Anxiety," in *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W.W. Norton, 1966), 401-411.

could result in the form of dissociative disorders. Early twenty-first-century studies reveal that trauma inflicted early in a child's life by someone the child trusts triggers a variety of defense mechanisms, among them repression of the memory and perceived physical disembodiment during the event that later manifests as "a loss of control over one's body."³¹⁷ One of the most significant forms of trauma is the primal scene, in which the child witnesses the heterosexual sex act and construes it as an act of violence. Witnessing the primal scene introduces the child to sexual difference³¹⁸ and has the potential to bring about the castration complex when the vagina is interpreted as a wound.³¹⁹ In a patriarchal culture, in which the penis symbolizes power, Freud reasoned that girls develop penis envy and that boys fear castration.³²⁰ During the normalization process, parents or guardians emphasize the significance of sexual difference, which reinforces a girl's supposed lack of power and a boy's supposed fear of his loss of power. Therefore, normalization, in which a child's self undergoes involuntary transformation, can also be seen as a form of trauma.

In the case of Cassatt's painting, the girl is being trained to privilege her physical beauty over her mind and adopt the heteronormative femininity performed by her mother. Because her mother is the trusted authority figure, the child's facial expression suggests a sense of having no control in a situation in which her body and character are being molded to fit a construct that her culture and class have established as a norm. This lack

³¹⁷ David Spiegel, "Coming Apart: Trauma and the Fragmentation of the Self," *Cerebrum*, 2008, https://www.dana.org/Cerebrum/2008/Coming_Apart__Trauma_and_the_Fragmentation_of_the_Self/.

³¹⁸ Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud: "An Infantile Neurosis" and Other Works*, trans. James Strachey, vol. 17 (London: The Hogarth Press, 1955). In this case study, Freud's young patient (commonly known as the "Wolf Man") developed neuroses from witnessing or dreaming about his parents copulating *a tergo*.

³¹⁹ Jonathan Metzl, "From Scopophilia to Survivor: A Brief History of Voyeurism," *Textual Practice* 18, no. 3 (January 2004): 420, doi:10.1080/09502360410001732935.

³²⁰ Freud, "The Sexual Life of Human Beings," in *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, 318.

of control is underscored by her mother's placement of one hand on her back as she trains the child to sit upright and, as noted above, in her seemingly involuntarily sealed mouth. While a combination of time and psychic repression will likely dull or erase this moment from the child's conscious memory and could remain repressed for the duration of her life, the stress from this traumatic event could resurface later in her life. Although Cassatt could not have known the results of psychological studies that would occur over a century after she completed this painting, her choice to include the child's anxious facial expression and subordinate the red tones in the child's lips with flesh-toned paint points to a perception that normalization was anything but a natural or seamless process.

Resistance and the Animal

Idealized coming-of-age scenarios portray children who readily accept normalization. However, literature, visual culture, and reality abound with children whose desires run counter to their guardians' plans for them. Animals, not bound to milestones and rituals constructed by human society, served (and continues to serve) as allies and alter egos of these children desiring to delay their development into heteronormative adults. Stockton calls this voluntarily enforced plateau in the process of growing "up" "sideways growth," one of several phenomena of queer childhood as it is viewed through a heteronormative lens. When animals enter the equation, she continues, they provide "opportunities...for children's motions inside their delay, making delay a sideways growth the child [*sic*] in part controls for herself."³²¹

³²¹ Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 11, 90-91.

What is it about the dog that invites the child to take refuge from the human world? Deleuze and Guattari initially place dogs in the category of “individuated,” or companion, animals. Companion animals, due to the close bonds they form with humans, “invite us to regress [and] draw us into narcissistic contemplation.”³²² A stage of imagined omnipotence, infantile narcissism is a period in which the infant perceives the mother’s body as an extension of its own that exists only to serve the infant’s desires.³²³ Domesticated to be a loyal friend and attendant (as in the cliché of fetching the newspaper or the master’s slippers), a dog might assume a maternal role as a fulfiller of needs and desires, triggering in the companion human a regression to infantile narcissism as the ego struggles to verify itself. At this point, Stockton’s theory meets that of Deleuze and Guattari. For the child growing sideways, this “regressive” relationship with an individuated animal acts as an antidote to heteronormative teleologies. In this context, the dog transcends the status of a pet to assume the role of “a metaphor for all that is loyal, familial, and family-photogenic... [as well as] a living screen for the child’s self-projections.”³²⁴

It must be emphasized that the child’s relationship with the individuated animal is not what Deleuze and Guattari call a “becoming.”³²⁵ The queer child growing sideways apparently seeks—consciously, willingly, and voluntarily—an outlet for shelter from normalizing forces. Through an alliance with the individuated animal, the queer child is

³²² Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, “1730: Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal, Becoming-Imperceptible...,” in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 240.

³²³ Freud, “The Archaic Features and Infantilism of Dreams,” in *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W.W. Norton, 1966), 204.

³²⁴ Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 90.

³²⁵ A becoming occurs unconsciously and, therefore, involuntarily. Often it occurs while an individual is engaged in the act of creation. This is discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

free to express “a gamut of emotions ... in the face of a future not careful of [her] pleasure.” Stockton points out the differences between animal and “human generations,”³²⁶ which allows the child to escape the “concept of a future altogether.”³²⁷ Furthermore, the cultural examples Stockton deploys involve dogs and horses kept as companions. This, she confirms, involves the narcissistic regression toward Deleuze’s and Guattari’s individuated, or Oedipal, animal.³²⁸ In other words, while the relationship between Baptiste and Cassatt’s resistant model may be described as atavistic or narcissistic, it is not a “becoming.” The very status of the relationship as a desired element of the child’s sideways growth once again informs us of the upsetting effects of normalization on children and the refuges that some children will seek as they resist the efforts of their parents and society.

Cassatt captures a moment of sideways growth in *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* (1878)³²⁹ (fig. 6). Unlike Fèvre, who consciously acknowledges her role as an object of the public gaze, Cassatt’s earlier child model, enclosed within the private sphere but nonetheless an object of the audience’s gaze, allows her body to relax and refuses to mask her facial expression. When viewed at arm’s length, this expression appears to be annoyance, boredom, or contempt, as perceived by most scholars.³³⁰ In addition to

³²⁶ As in the common adage that each “human” year is the equivalent of seven “dog years.”

³²⁷ Kathryn Bond Stockton, *The Queer Child, or Growing Sideways in the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 53.

³²⁸ Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 88-116.

³²⁹ Cassatt, *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair*, 1878, oil on canvas, 88 x 128.5cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

³³⁰ Nochlin describes the girl’s expression as one of “irritation” in “Mary Cassatt’s Modernity,” in *Representing Women* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999), 200; Pollock characterizes it as “slightly sour [with] a touch of discontent.” See *Mary Cassatt: Painter of Modern Women*, 131.; Mathews perceives the girl’s “slightly pouting expression” as a

concurring with the characterization of boredom, Kimberly Jones hypothesizes that the girl's expression might be one of "exhaust[ion] after...a day of running around and playing."³³¹ However, when enlarged and examined at a closer range, her face betrays a sense of sadness or melancholy, with the translucent blue shadow beneath her left eye assuming the shape of a tear beginning to stream onto her cheek (fig. 7). If the child is aware of the panopticon, she demonstrates no concern for its perception of her. Rather, she directs her attention toward a dog, Cassatt's Belgian Griffon Baptiste,³³² lying on the chair opposite her. The relationship between the girl and Baptiste will be significant in offering a possible explanation for the girl's refusal to conform to normative expectations.

The sitter's contradictory attributes of a doll-like face and provocative pose often frames *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* as a subversion of childhood innocence.³³³ For example, Harriet Scott Chessman argues that the girl's "pose of an odalisque ... prefigures [her] mature sexuality" and places her in the heteronormatively feminine role

complement to her pose to suggest a sense of "dissatisfaction." See "Mary Cassatt and the 'Modern Madonna' of the Nineteenth Century" (PhD diss., New York University, 1980), 47; Greg Thomas opts for the phrase "spirited disdain" in "Impressionist Dolls," 110.

³³¹ Kimberly Jones and Robin Oliveira, *Impressionists With Benefits? The Painting Partnership Of Degas And Cassatt*, interview by Susan Stamberg, Radio, May 23, 2014, National Public Radio, <http://www.npr.org/2014/05/23/314617607/impressionists-with-benefits-the-painting-partnership-of-degas-and-cassatt>. Accessed July 25, 2015.

³³² Kimberly Jones, "Introduction to the Exhibition: 'Degas/Cassatt'" (Lecture, "Degas/Cassatt" special exhibition, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, May 11, 2014), <http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/audio-video/audio/degas-cassatt-jones.html>. Accessed August 17, 2015.

³³³ See Chapter Two for an analysis of this painting regarding the context of innocence.

of “a consumable product.”³³⁴ However, precocious suggestions of sexuality do not necessarily equal a readiness for or anticipation of heteronormative adulthood. The child in the painting could be reacting to biological impulses that make no determination as to her potential objects of desire. In her likely constructed teleology, her personal desires are irrelevant.

As a member of the bourgeoisie, the girl in Cassatt’s painting has likely witnessed what adulthood means to the men and women of her class. Once married, couples were expected to have children to combat the perceived threat of national depopulation.³³⁵ Despite improved access to education, bourgeois women were still expected to remain within the domestic sphere while their husbands earned salaries in the public sphere. While in Paris during the closing years of the century, norms for young wives would allow them the freedom to move around the city without a chaperone,³³⁶ neither sex had freed itself from its obligation of hyper-conscious performance of class and gender. Perhaps, despite the attempts of normalizing forces within her life, the girl in the blue armchair finds such a future confining and unthinkable.

Although Cassatt’s model is still in her *première enfance*, her normalization is underway through lessons in her toilette and through gender-specific books and toys that she receives from her parents and other adults within her family’s social circle. The lacy details of her dress and her “feminine” hairstyle demonstrates that whoever manages her appearance knows the importance of performing one’s assigned gender in the public

³³⁴ Harriet Scott Chessman, “Mary Cassatt and the Maternal Body,” in *American Iconology: New Approaches to Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature*, ed. David C. Miller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 250.

³³⁵ Norma Broude, “Mary Cassatt: Modern Woman or the Cult of True Womanhood?,” *Woman’s Art Journal* 21, no. 2 (Autumn 2000-Winter 2001): 39–40.

³³⁶ Plott, “The Rules of the Game,” 537.

spectacle of the late nineteenth century. Nevertheless, whatever she has already gleaned of the norms of adulthood, her facial expression betrays anything but anticipation of reaching that stage of life. This section will examine *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* as a depiction of resistance against the heteronormative teleology of childhood.

Before addressing Stockton's theories of sideways growth and the child-animal alliance as they pertain to Baptiste's role in the girl's resistance to normalization, the role of evolutionary theory needs to be addressed. The identical chairs on which the figures lounge appear to share an origin beneath the picture plane, as suggested in the chairs' overlapping dust ruffles. Halfway between the bottom edge of the canvas and the horizontal axis, the chairs appear to separate, branching diagonally toward the left and the right in the manner of a genealogical or evolutionary tree. The horizontal position in which Baptiste lies denotes the "animal" state of quadrupedality, while the girl's slouching position could denote a midway point between that of a quadruped and that of a biped, or "true" human state.³³⁷ If her evolution into a *Homo sapiens* were complete, the girl would adopt a stiff, upright pose like that of Odile Fèvre and Cassatt's other normalized sitters. Rather, the little girl poses in a manner that nearly mimics a dog lying on its back, in anticipation of a "belly rub." While her outward appearance is that of a human, she struggles to retain the animal characteristics her adult counterparts happily relinquished and, as the historical context demonstrates, intended to isolate to the distant past.

The same year that Cassatt produced *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair*, the Société d'Anthropologie exhibited human and simian skeletal remains beside each other at the

³³⁷ Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1961), 46-47, n. 1

Exposition Universelle and in a recently opened anthropology museum in Paris. While these events doubtlessly enthralled some spectators, others publicly expressed their horror at the dissolution of inter-species boundaries. Drawing from Julia Kristeva's theory of the "abject," or liminal condition,³³⁸ Martha Lucy points out late nineteenth-century Parisians' fear of ambiguity and unintelligibility, which was only exacerbated by the introduction of evolutionary discourses and contemporary archaeological discoveries of Neanderthal skulls, whose contours lack clear boundaries between "human" and "simian" designations. Two years after Cassatt completed her painting, Fernand Corman's *Cain Fleeing with His Family* (1880)³³⁹ incited heated controversy when he exhibited it at the Salon. A large-scale oil on canvas produced in the manner of the academic history painting, *Cain Fleeing with His Family* depicts the Old Testament family as Paleolithic "cavemen" appear in the popular imagination. Most significantly, the figures' "atavistic anatomies" provoked hostile reviews for their "intermediary" status between human and animal.³⁴⁰ How does this species-based ambiguity compare to animality in Cassatt's *Sitter*? Before answering that question, it is necessary to address a growing interest in atavistic human subjects within Cassatt's professional circle.

In a 1903 letter to art dealer Ambrose Vollard, Cassatt also recalls that Degas "had worked on [the painting]."³⁴¹ Infrared analysis of the painting in 2014 revealed that

³³⁸ Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), cited in Martha Lucy, "Reading the Animal in Degas's *Young Spartans*," *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 2, no. 1 (Spring 2003), <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/spring03/222-reading-the-animal-in-degass-young-spartans>. Accessed July 17, 2015.

³³⁹ Fernand Corman, *Cain Fleeing with His Family*, 1880, oil on canvas, 400 x 700cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

³⁴⁰ Lucy, "Reading the Animal in Degas's *Young Spartans*."

³⁴¹ Cassatt, letter to Vollard, 1903, in *Cassatt and Her Circle*, 281-282.

Degas's hand likely lies in the background, where "intentional abrasion of the surface" in the form of "strokes of grayish, almost silvery brown paint not found elsewhere in the picture" and, at that point in time, uncharacteristic of Cassatt's academic application of brushwork. Originally, Cassatt used a horizontal line to situate "a single back wall" more closely to the foreground. Degas's alterations deepened the recession of the background, transforming one wall into two with perpendicular orthogonals.³⁴² Although he did not contribute to the forms of the girl or Baptiste, his growing interest in the atavistic body is significant when considering the issue of animality in the painting.

Degas and a number of other avant-garde artists in Paris had read Darwin's work and developed an interest in anthropological discoveries, as well as continuing debates in evolutionary studies. At approximately the same time Cassatt was working on *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair*, Degas was drawing preparatory sketches for his sculpture of *The Little Dancer* (sketches 1878-79)³⁴³ (fig. 8), which drew controversy for its "simian" cranial features when exhibited in 1881³⁴⁴ (fig. 9). One anonymous critic called the dancer "a semi-idiot" and used the sculpture to argue that the new direction in art is to

³⁴² Kimberly A. Jones, "Degas/Cassatt," exh. brochure (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 2014), 7.
<http://www.nga.gov/content/dam/ngaweb/exhibitions/pdfs/2014/degas-cassatt-brochure.pdf>. Accessed July 17, 2015. Despite Degas's expansion of perspective, compressed space became an iconic formal attribute of Cassatt's later works, as initially observed by Roszika Parker and Griselda Pollock in *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2013), 41.

³⁴³ Edgar Degas, *Four Studies of a Dancer*, 1878-79, chalk on paper, 47.2 x 58.5cm, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

³⁴⁴ Degas, *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen*, 1878-81, pigmented beeswax, clay, metal armature, rope, paintbrushes, human hair, silk and linen ribbon, cotton faille bodice, cotton and silk tutu, linen slippers, on wooden base, 98.9 x 34.7 x 35.2 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

“perpetuate the vile rather than the beautiful.”³⁴⁵ Given the growing atmosphere of Social Darwinism, which applies Darwinian natural selection to humans based on race, gender, and class, physiognomic analysis of the dancer’s head would mark her as a member of the proletariat, a class perceived as more violent, criminal, and “animalistic” than their “fitter” and “more civilized” counterparts in the bourgeoisie.³⁴⁶ Considering the economic privilege that Degas had enjoyed for the duration of his life, as well as his occasional disparaging remarks against women,³⁴⁷ it is tempting to assess the situation from the standpoint of a twenty-first-century audience and read the sculpture as a Social Darwinist parody of dancers as a class and as a sex. However, his role as an innovator in the visual arts, the more relevant issue for the late nineteenth century, must also be considered.

Most dancers did hail from the proletariat, prompting their parents to enroll them in dance lessons, which could earn them a meager living by their early teens after a battery of examinations that only the most talented passed. Low salaries and dismal odds for success left many dancers with few options besides prostituting themselves to wealthy middle-aged “protectors” whose subscriptions to the ballet earned the men free reign of the backstage area, including the dancers’ dressing rooms.³⁴⁸ This combination of low

³⁴⁵ Unsigned review, *Artist* (May 1, 1881) “By Our Lady Correspondent;” cited in Kate Flint, *Impressionists in England: The Critical Reception* (1984); cited in Lucy, “The Evolutionary Body: Refiguring the Nude in Post-Darwinian French Art” (Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 2004), 325, <http://search.proquest.com/pqdtglobal/docview/305167516/abstract/88219BF7235A49F0PQ/5?accountid=14665>.

³⁴⁶ Lucy, “Reading the Animal in Degas’s *Young Spartans*.”

³⁴⁷ Pollock mentions an instance in which Degas piqued Cassatt’s anger with his comment that “women do not even know what style is.” See *Mary Cassatt*, 20.

³⁴⁸ Robert Herbert, *Impressionism: Art, Leisure, and Parisian Society* (New York: Yale University Press, 1988), 110, 115.

socioeconomic status and engagement in sexual gratification to supplement their low or non-existent salaries to support their families would have “supported” the claims of Social Darwinists as to the girls’ propensity to unlawful behavior. As for Degas, Lucy convincingly argues that his atavistic rendering of the dancer fails to reveal any negative opinions he might have held toward the proletariat, as he manipulates the bodies of the much-lauded ancient Spartans in the same manner (fig. 11).³⁴⁹ Rather, this new stylistic direction, Lucy contends, attempts to dissolve boundaries, including those between human and animal, to produce an “altogether modern body.”³⁵⁰ In a culture that feared ambiguity, it is clear why Degas’s turn away from a clearly “human” body proved unpopular with conservative critics.

How, then, might this situation, combined with the politics of gender, have affected the original reception of Cassatt’s painting? Contemporary critical reaction seems glaringly absent. The livret for the Fourth Impressionist exhibition in 1879 lists a painting titled *Portrait de petite fille*, exhibited as number forty-seven.³⁵¹ Given the small number of portraits of children (especially children lacking any form of identification, such as initials), Cassatt had painted by the late 1870s, the date of the completion of *Little*

³⁴⁹ Degas, *Young Spartans*, 1880, oil on canvas, 109.5 x 155cm, National Gallery, London. In this reworking of the original painting from 1860, Degas affords more prominence to a youth on all fours in the lower right-hand corner. Simultaneously one of his companions who originally stood with his back completely to the viewer now faces the left-hand side of the canvas to reveal the acute angle of his forehead. In other words, both boys have assumed a more “animal” appearance.

³⁵⁰ Lucy, “Reading the Animal in Degas’s *Young Spartans*.”

³⁵¹ *Catalogue de la 4e Exposition de peinture, par M. Bracquemond, Mme Bracquemond, M. Caillebotte, M. Cals, Mlle Cassatt, MM. Degas, Forain, Lebourg, Monet, Pissaro, Feu Piette, Rouart, H. Somm, Tillot et Zandomenighi du 10 avril au 11 mai 1879 de 10 heures à 6 heures, 28, avenue de l’Opéra, Paris* (Paris: Typ. de Morris père et fils, 1879), 4. <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8618485s>. Accessed July 23, 2015.

Girl in a Blue Armchair, and the absence of the girl's proper name in either the livret entry or Cassatt's correspondence, it is possible that these two paintings could be one in the same. However, the most comprehensive online catalogue raisonné argues that no evidence exists to support this claim.³⁵² While existing contemporary publications lack criticism of *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair*, a letter Cassatt wrote to Vollard in 1903 notes that she submitted the painting to the "American section of the [Exposition Universelle of 1878] but was refused" by the jury of three men,³⁵³ preventing its positive or negative reception by contemporary critics.

Despite the absence of public reviews, the subtlety of the child's atavism could have elicited a hostile reception. Combined with the independence she conveys through the angle of her head, her provocative pose reveals a subtle link to her animal self that remains unsevered. With her contemporary bourgeois clothing, face and hair apparently fresh from the toilette, and head positioned at an angle that defies physiognomic analysis, Cassatt's sitter lacks the high degree of atavism in Corman's prehistoric family and Degas's human subjects of the late 1870s and early 1880s. Such subtle animality facilitates the girl's "passing" as a modern human, making her even more threatening to the boundary-loving status quo.

Dana Seitler explains that the nineteenth-century public comprehended the "most powerful manifestations" of the animal as those that appeared suddenly in or on an

³⁵² "The Blue Room," in *Mary Cassatt: A New Catalogue Raisonné*, ed. Catherine Rogers (New York: Adelson Galleries, 2015), <http://www.marycassatt.com/entry.php?CatalogNumber=56>. Accessed July 23, 2015. This catalogue aims to update the Breeskin catalogue (1970), which was, at the time, the most comprehensive listing of Cassatt's work.

³⁵³ Cassatt, letter to Ambrose Vollard, 1903, in *Cassatt and Her Circle: Selected Letters*, ed. Nancy Mowll Mathews (New York: Abbeville Press, 1984), 281-282.

“otherwise human body.”³⁵⁴ Established norms repeatedly marked evidence of animality in cranial and other bodily proportions, facilitating the marginalization and containment of the overtly atavistic body. When the animal lurked beneath the surface, however, containment was more difficult. Whereas normative adults accepted and admired animals as symbols of children’s innocence in the “proper” context, a provocatively posed (and horizontally oriented) girl actively locking her unhappy gaze onto an animal might have, especially in the age of Darwin, suggested the sudden manifestation of the animal in the *Homo sapiens*. Could Cassatt’s subtle, yet sudden, animalistic emergence be a response to Degas’s turn toward atavism in his *Young Spartans* and *Little Dancer*, or could it be part of a progression from what Lucy calls the “classical” body to the “modern” body?³⁵⁵

An analysis of a portrait that Degas painted of a child nearly twenty years earlier might shed light on the reason for Cassatt’s atavistic turn. Once misrepresented as Degas’s student, Cassatt became an admirer of the Impressionists’ common stylistic elements, such as loose brushstrokes and emotional disengagement, between 1873 and 1874. Between this period and the late 1870s, Cassatt likely saw Degas’s portrait of a young Hortense Valpinçon (1869-71)³⁵⁶ (fig. 10), the daughter of the artist’s close friend

³⁵⁴ Dana Seitler, *Atavistic Tendencies: The Culture of Science in American Modernity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 6–7.

³⁵⁵ Lucy, “Reading the Animal in Degas’s *Young Spartans*.” In addition to human/animal binary, Degas’s “modern” body also partially renders gender ambiguous. Whitney Davis notes that the girls’ and boys’ “[s]ex characteristics have been exchanged or wholly eliminated.” While he cautions the reader to avoid seeing these bodies as “hermaphroditic,” he points out that the boys’ bodies bear the “signs of immaturity, variability, transformation, and uncertainty.” See “‘Homosexualism,’ Gay and Lesbian Studies, and Queer Theory in Art History,” in *The Subjects of Art History: Historical Objects in Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Mark A. Cheetham, Michael Ann Holly, and Keith Moxey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 133–134.

³⁵⁶ Edgar Degas, *Hortense Valpinçon as a Child*, 1869-71, oil on mattress ticking, 100 x 73cm, Minneapolis Institute of Arts.

Paul. In a move that Mathews describes as “not generally popular with adults,” Degas depicts the child as “willful [and] self-possessed,” characteristics that mark her not as a reflection of her parents but rather “as an individual.”³⁵⁷ Like Cassatt’s young sitter eight to nine years later, Valpinçon resists conforming to normative “ladylike” standards for girls her age as she stares beyond the audience’s line of sight (toward her parents, perhaps?) with her left eyebrow somewhat arched, mouth turned slightly upward in a sly smile, and shoulders positioned as if they are beginning to shrug. She does not attempt to hide her half-eaten and slightly browning apple, angling its imperfect texture toward the audience. Although she appears to lack the more obvious animalistic qualities of Degas’s subjects of the following decades,³⁵⁸ her lack of “proper” table manners suggest a closer relationship to nature than culture.

Despite Valpinçon’s “unrefined” qualities, the white fur bolero or shrug that covers her white pinafore and black dress places her at a higher level of the evolutionary hierarchy than Cassatt’s model. While the presence of “excessive” natural body hair signifies lurking atavism, or even “evolutionary regression,”³⁵⁹ the presence of animal fur in the form of a pelt worn on the human body suggests human triumph over the animal. In sum, although Valpinçon displays a subtle atavistic attribute, her evolutionary status is, in the normative view, above that of Cassatt’s model, who aims for an equal status with the dog Baptiste. Nevertheless, just as Degas’s brushstrokes contributed to making *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair* Cassatt’s “first true Impressionist painting,”³⁶⁰ this early step in

³⁵⁷ Mathews, “Mary Cassatt and the ‘Modern Madonna’,” 45-46.

³⁵⁸ Degas, *Young Spartans*, 1860-61 (reworked later), oil on canvas, 109.5 x 155cm, National Gallery, London.

³⁵⁹ Seitler, *Atavistic Tendencies*, 9.

³⁶⁰ Jones, “Degas/Cassatt,” 3.

his direction of atavistic human subjects could have played a role in the stylistic representation of Cassatt's young model, as well.

Despite the "less evolved" state of the girl in the blue armchair than that of Valpinçon, Cassatt's model and Baptiste have separated from their common ancestor into two distinct species, and, arguably as a result, their moods have differentiated, as well. Baptiste has fallen asleep, signifying a sense of relaxation and tranquility, while close inspection reveals sadness in the girl's eyes. Recalling the perceived danger of lurking atavism beneath the surface of those who appear completely human, these differing emotional reactions can only be described as radical, if not threatening, for its time. Just as Cassatt's model deviates from normative girls who anticipate their future roles, she also deviates from normative humans, especially bourgeois humans, who celebrate their "evolved" state and actively suppress the animal.

The affective differentiation between the human child and the dog seems to suggest that the animal state, the point of origin, is something from which humans did not "evolve" naturally but, rather, something that humans have willingly abandoned in exchange for bipedality and "rationality," as well as the burdens of an awareness of one's own mortality, and constructed obligations. Freud argues that the newly bipedal human found itself disgusted by odors that it once tolerated, particularly menstrual blood and fecal matter. More relevantly, walking upright brought about repugnance for the animal's shameless engagement in the sex act. Interestingly, Freud illustrates this point with the image of the dog, simultaneously "[humanity's] most faithful friend in the animal world" and a word commonly deployed as a pejorative toward other humans. The dog's tolerance for what the human finds abhorrent turns "man's best friend" into a visual

metaphor of disgust.³⁶¹ Therefore, for the girl in Cassatt's painting to display her initial phase of sexuality without shame couples with her semi-horizontal pose to signify her resistance to bourgeois norms by opting to reclaim the manners that her evolutionary ancestors rejected many millennia earlier.

Since making the conscious decision to jettison its animality, humanity has wandered far from its origin, removing itself from the natural world in favor of civilization and becoming something different, alien. Cassatt's model demonstrates her awareness of the negative effects of the burdens and separation from her evolutionary ancestral home with her melancholic expression and a metaphoric tear beginning to well in her left eye as she directs her attention toward Baptiste. The directional line formed by her gaze forms a link, if not a bond, between her and her canine counterpart. Her facial expression and body language suggest a longing to shed her "alien" skin and return to her former animal state—free from the world of heteronormative, bourgeois femininity that will obligate her to marry and perpetuate her class, regardless of whether she desires such a life. The horizontality of Baptiste's body and eyes, as well as the room itself, reveal a possible reason for the girl's sorrowful expression in addition to a desire to delay adulthood and return to her animal origin. Horizontal lines and cool colors such as blue convey tranquility and stability, suggesting that Baptiste leads a calm life unencumbered by the constructed obligations of the human world. The stylish quality of the furniture in the room signifies the upper-class status of the homeowner or tenant, and, by extension, indicates that the dog's every need and desire are provided by a doting caregiver. Considering these luxuries, the girl's unhappiness could also be the result of her envy of

³⁶¹ Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, 46-47, n. 1.

an animal that does not have to sacrifice comfort or happiness for food, shelter, and love, which, in turn, provide a sense of stability.

Queering the Book

Children's literature in Europe came into existence in the late seventeenth century, initially consisting primarily of "[alphabet] and 'courtesy' books"³⁶² that taught literacy and good manners. Given the requirements for the possession of literature—namely literacy, disposable income, and leisure time—few children had access to it before the implementation of compulsory formal education. The presence of books alone marked children as members of the middle to upper ranks of the bourgeoisie. In times when child labor was still legal in France and the United States, the presence of books informed the audience that the child or children in the picture plane enjoyed leisure time, a luxury not available to poor and working-class children. Child sitters in possession of a book or engaging in the act of reading conveyed their literacy, a rare attribute among children and adults outside the bourgeoisie. However, during the Third Republic, as the French government increasingly prohibited child labor and mandated primary education, literacy rates climbed dramatically, reaching a national average of over ninety-eight percent of the population by 1885.³⁶³ In the United States, where child labor would remain legal and primary education optional until 1933, literacy rates still rose among

³⁶² Zohar Shavit, "The Historical Model of the Development of Children's Literature," in *Aspects and Issues in the History of Children's Literature*, ed. Maria Nikolajeva (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995), 29.

³⁶³ A.R. Gillis, "Institutional Dynamics and Dangerous Classes: Reading, Writing, and Arrest in Nineteenth-Century France" *Social Forces* 82, no. 4 (2004): 1303.

“native-born whites,” reaching ninety-one percent for women and ninety-three percent for men by 1860.³⁶⁴

Coincidentally, mid-century witnessed the popularity of a *La Bibliothèque rose*, a children’s literature series written exclusively by women. The volumes within *La Bibliothèque rose* served the purpose of “socializ[ing] children into a culture that, to varying degrees, denigrated and oppressed both women and children.”³⁶⁵ Louis Hachette, the original publisher of the series, intended that all *Bibliothèque rose* books be accessible with their vendors’ locations primarily in train stations and their prices within reason for all income levels within the bourgeoisie.³⁶⁶ With the growing popularity of the Parisian environs as locations for leisurely outings and second homes, the bourgeoisie were frequent passengers on the growing French rail network. It is, therefore, almost certain that the children in the families of successful Impressionist artists, as well as the children of their patrons, read books in the *Bibliothèque rose* series.

Young readers feature widely in the oeuvres of many Impressionist artists, especially in that of Morisot While, with increasing shutter speeds, photographs could clearly represent the details of such normalizing agents like books, painterly brushstrokes, strategic placement of reading material, and angles at which artists portray their sitters often obscure details like book titles, leaving room for doubt as to whether the readers are engaging in truly “appropriate” activities. In some instances, primary sources

³⁶⁴ Shrock, *The Gilded Age*, 151.

³⁶⁵ Ruth Carver Capasso, “*La Bibliothèque rose*: Children and Imperialism in Nineteenth-Century France,” *The French Review* 77, no. 2 (December 2003), 275.

³⁶⁶ Capasso, “*La Bibliothèque rose*,” 274.

provide helpful details, as in a description of *Julie Manet Holding a Book* (1889)³⁶⁷ (fig. 12), the sitter identifies her book as Jean Racine’s tragic play *Britannicus*.³⁶⁸ This portrait and its associated quote will be examined in detail in this chapter, primarily because it numbers among the few identifications of books that appear in the writings of individuals from Morisot’s circle.

Queer Literary Choices for a Young Lady

One year after Morisot’s death, her loved ones organized a memorial exhibition that Julie documented in her diary. As her mother’s favorite model, Julie develops from infant to adolescent over the span of the artist’s oeuvre from 1879 to 1894. Among the several portraits that feature her reading, for this painting, she identifies the open book in her lap. Although she does not note the title of the portrait, the detailed description at the beginning of the entry suggests *Julie Manet Holding a Book*, painted when the sitter was ten or eleven years old.

My portrait, in a pale [pink] dress against a background of door-hangings with dark beads. I have a side parting and an orange bow, a very round Egyptian-looking face, red lips, a string of pearls around my neck, hands so daintily small, a turquoise ring. I am holding on my lap an antique book (a copy of Racine) and I am reciting ‘Come hither, Nero, and take your place, etc....’³⁶⁹

³⁶⁷ Morisot, *Julie Manet Holding a Book*, 1889, oil on canvas, 65 x 54cm, private collection.

³⁶⁸ Julie Manet, *Growing up with the Impressionists: The Diary of Julie Manet*, trans. by Rosalind de Boland Roberts and Jane Roberts (London: Sotheby’s Publications, 1987), 93.

³⁶⁹ Manet, “Wednesday, 4th March to Friday, 6th March,” in *Growing up with the Impressionists*, 93. Roberts and Roberts use the word “rose” to describe the color of Julie’s dress, but this is likely a mistranslation of the French word *rose*, which means “pink.”

Julie's quote is from the opening line Act IV, scene 2 of *Britannicus* (1670), in which Agrippina begins to plead her defense to her son, the emperor of Rome, after he learns of the engagement of his stepbrother and original heir to the throne Britannicus to Junia, an engagement that Nero opposes and Agrippina supports. Because Junia is descended from the first emperor Augustus, such a union would, according to Nero, strengthen Britannicus's claim to the throne. Worse, because Nero desires Junia, the marriage would impede his own plans to seduce her. Agrippina's support for the marriage, in addition to her regular attempts to control her son and her constant reminders that her machinations alone secured his ascension to the throne, compounds Nero's anger toward her. When she pleads her defense in Act IV, scene 2, she again centralizes her role in his rise to power, implying that he should be grateful to her. However, her words only enrage her son, who, convinced that she intends to control him, retorts that she merely assisted him to satisfy her own thirst for power. From this point, he begins his descent from "an emerging monster...who does not dare declare himself yet"³⁷⁰ to an overt "monster" who poisons his half-brother and observes his painful death without emotion. Given this context, what can the audience deduce from Morisot's decision to capture her daughter speaking lines that Nero would use as his rationale for his fateful decisions?

Roberts and Roberts point out that Julie likely began "drawing and painting ... at a very young age" and that "her only desire was to become an artist like her mother."³⁷¹

Late nineteenth-century Europe did not offer many prospects for educated and talented

³⁷⁰ Jean Racine, second preface to *Britannicus: Tragédie* (Paris: Claude Barbin, 1670/1674), *Théâtre Classique*, <http://artflsrv02.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/philologic/getobject.pl?c.110:1.theatre1013>. Accessed June 15, 2015. My translation of "...un monster naissant, mais qui n'ose encore se declarer..."

³⁷¹ Roberts and Roberts, "Introduction," 17, 22.

women. As noted in Chapter One, even Morisot, who hailed from an upper-class family and formed friendships with many influential and well-respected members of the Parisian creative class, found herself in the difficult situation of socially-imposed “girlhood” as an unmarried woman in her early thirties. In other words, like a child, she was to be chaperoned outside the domestic sphere, avoid reading “unsuitable” books like those written by Darwin, and form friendships only with individuals deemed “appropriate” by the legal adults of the household. Additionally, her status as a successful and ambitious artist made her unmarriageable in the eyes of the heteronormative male status quo.³⁷² On the other hand, a normative late nineteenth-century marriage held the power to curtail a woman’s creative ambitions. Therefore, she faced the dilemma of turning her back on painting, marrying a man she did not love, or continuing to live as a legal minor. Having described this phase in her life as “impossible,”³⁷³ her negative memories were likely not far from her conscious thoughts as she saw her daughter following in her footsteps. Would Julie face a similar difficult dilemma during her adult years? Would norms evolve to either better accept the professional woman or, if such a situation should arise, acknowledge the adult status of the unmarried woman over the age of thirty? In 1889, Morisot had no way of knowing that Julie would marry fellow artist Ernest Rouart eleven years later and would continue to paint and organize retrospective exhibitions of her relatives’ and guardians’ oeuvres until her own death in 1966.³⁷⁴ Morisot had only her relatively recent memories and an unconditional love for her daughter.

³⁷² Higonnet, *Berthe Morisot*, 114-116.

³⁷³ Morisot, undated letter to Edma Pontillon, c. 1873-1874, in *Berthe Morisot: The Correspondence*, 90.

³⁷⁴ Roberts and Roberts, “Envoi,” in *Growing Up with the Impressionists*, 191.

Including Act IV, scene 2 of *Britannicus* into this narrative, we find the ambitious Agrippina, who worked within the confines of normative femininity in first-century Rome to ensure her son's ascension to the role of emperor. As she recounts her story and tells her son that he should be indebted to her for her efforts, we see the manifestation of Freud's argument that a woman "can transfer to her son the ambition which she has been obliged to suppress in herself."³⁷⁵ As during the Roman Empire, normative femininity of the late nineteenth century restricted women's ambitions to indirect manifestation. If Morisot, despite her abstention from feminist politics, feared that her daughter's dream of becoming an artist would have to be sacrificed and redirected toward her male progeny after marriage, her talented daughter's recitation of a monologue of a queerly ambitious Roman woman was the ideal means of communicating her trepidation.

Further analysis into the context of *Julie Manet Holding a Book* reveals that the portrait's subject possessed more than artistic talent. In her diary entry, Julie uses the word "recite," which suggests memorization. How common was it in the 1880s for a ten- or eleven year-old girl to memorize a monologue consisting of eighty-nine lines? For that matter, how often did girls of any age engross themselves in the works of Racine? Heywood implies that the practice had been rare in the eighteenth century, noting the "exceptional" father of the Comtesse de Boigne, who "had taught [his daughter] to read by the age of three, so that she could manage the tragedies of Racine."³⁷⁶ Literature that requires children to have reading lessons before reaching the stage of toddler is, it would seem, rather advanced and, therefore, in the late nineteenth-century heteronormative

³⁷⁵ Sigmund Freud, "Femininity," in *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton, 1965), 99–119.

³⁷⁶ Heywood, *Growing Up in France*, 148.

mindset, better suited for boys than girls. By the second half of the nineteenth century, bourgeois women were more likely to read popular novels and “weekly illustrated magazines” than the oeuvres of canonical writers. Serious reading, such as the consumption of newspapers and literary classics, was considered a “man’s” activity.³⁷⁷ While this information does not necessarily suggest that women and girls were discouraged from reading the works of “good old French authors,” it does suggest that Racine’s plays were not common choices for many women—and even less common for girls aged eight or nine—in late nineteenth-century France. With a rapidly growing and widely successful children’s literature market, Julie could have easily read books specifically written for girls in her age group, but the historical record shows evidence of her strong preference for “adult” literature at a young age.

Racine was only one of several authors of adult literature that Julie read as a child. She also enjoyed the work of Edgar Allan Poe and remarked that the journal of Romantic artist Eugène Delacroix was, in her opinion, rather “tedious.”³⁷⁸ What was Morisot’s opinion on her daughter’s reading habits? In 1884, Edma sent her younger the diary of her (Edma’s) daughter Jeanne, asking advice regarding the young woman’s writing style. After complimenting her niece as an advanced writer for her age, Morisot advised her sister to “be particular in the choice of reading—no drivel, nothing sentimental, nothing affected, [and] as many good old French authors as possible.”³⁷⁹ “Drivel” is a relative

³⁷⁷ Martyn Lyon, “New Readers in the Nineteenth Century: Women, Children, Workers,” in *A History of Reading in the West*, ed. Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (London: Polity Press, 1999), 315-320.

³⁷⁸ Roberts and Roberts, “Introduction,” 22

³⁷⁹ Berthe Morisot, letter to Edma Pontillon, August 1884, *The Correspondence with Her Family and Friends Manet, Puvis de Chavannes, Degas, Monet, Renoir, and Mallarmé*, ed. Denis Rouart, trans. Betty W. Hubbard (London: Camden Press Ltd, 1986), 139.

term that could be broadly interpreted as any number of literary attributes. However, Morisot's ban on sentiment and affect seem to clarify her connotation of the term. Such guidelines likely prohibited Julie from reading many of the books written for children. Most fairy tales deploy sentiment and affect in the plots of distressed princesses awaiting rescue by handsome princes. The popular children's author Sophie de Ségur also uses sentiment and affect as she dramatizes her heroine Sophie's misfortunes and brushes with danger. In a culture unnerved by scientific discoveries that substantiated evolutionary links between humans and animals, complex plots, provoking the reader's reasoning capabilities, were likely perceived as keeping the inner animal at bay.

Where the Book Meets the Animal

Morisot's portraits of Julie reading—combined with primary documents and consideration of Julie's choices of reading material—points to Morisot's likely view that the atavistic turn was a threat that parents should strive to prevent in their children. In her letter to Edma, Morisot justifies her guidelines for appropriate reading material by adding, "We are all born monkeys before we are ourselves; therein lies the danger of bad examples."³⁸⁰ With this statement, she seems to imply that humanity itself is a construct into which not-yet-human primates must be normalized. Her clause following the semicolon substantiates Darwinian thought, suggesting that humanity—like any construct—is a fluid and unfixed status that is constantly in danger of destabilization. Therefore, the absence of the "right" books and authors could result in evolutionary stagnation or even devolution. Widespread consumption and discussion of theories and

³⁸⁰ Morisot, undated letter to Edma Pontillon, c. August 1884, in *Berthe Morisot: The Correspondence*, 139.

discoveries in evolutionary biology during the closing decades of the nineteenth century likely contributed to her concerns.

In addition to her familiarity with Darwin's early work, Morisot lived among the Parisian intelligentsia and thus was also doubtlessly aware of, and possibly had read, the evolutionary theory of Lamarck. Preceding the work of Darwin by several decades, Lamarckian evolutionary theory would eventually be proven to have several inaccuracies and was initially dismissed by fellow scientists during his lifetime,³⁸¹ yet, by the late nineteenth century, Lamarck would receive posthumous recognition as a credible theorist in his native France.³⁸² Among Lamarck's now discredited assertions was one that must have given educated parents across France cause for concern—that bodily organs individuals fail to put to use will eventually deteriorate in terms of faculties deemed non-essential to the individual's basic survival. As with instances of evolutionary "progress" theoretically influenced by environmental factors, regression could be passed from parent to child.³⁸³ In other words, while unused portions of the brain that govern such "uniquely human" functions as intellectual reasoning and knowledge of the significance of cultural history to the present day would not hamper the organ's ability to keep the individual

³⁸¹ Martha Lucy, *The Evolutionary Body: Refiguring the Nude in Post-Darwinian French Art* (Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 2004), 46-47.
<http://search.proquest.com/pqdtglobal/docview/305167516/abstract/88219BF7235A49F0PQ/5?accountid=14665>. Accessed July 18, 2015.

³⁸² Marion Thomas, "Are Animals Just Noisy Machines?: Louis Boutan and the Co-Invention of Animal and Child Psychology in the French Third Republic," *Journal of the History of Biology* 38, no. 3 (October 1, 2005), 431-432.

³⁸³ Jean-Baptiste-Pierre-Antoine de Monet de Lamarck, *Philosophie zoologique, ou Exposition des considérations relative à l'histoire naturelle des animaux à la diversité de leur organisation et des facultés qu'ils en obtiennent; aux causes physiques qui maintiennent en eux la vie et donnent aux mouvements qu'ils exécutent; enfin, à celles qui produisent les unes le sentiment les autres l'intelligence de ceux qui en sont doués*, vol. 2 (Paris: Librairie F. Savy, 1873) 112-113.

alive, “non-essential” functions could weaken and disappear altogether without access to the proper reading material or other objects and activities that would maintain human intelligence. According to this line of reasoning, one could devolve into an earlier evolutionary state like a “monkey,” pass the “defect” to his or her offspring, and, thus, create an entire lineage of “subhumans” that unlock formerly repressed “animal” behavior, as Freud would discuss decades later.

Darwin’s paradigm of evolution as an ongoing process shattered the notion that humanity was a “fixed” species, thus appearing to substantiate Lamarck’s theory of regression. As Lucy points out, the lack of fixity in evolutionary processes further unnerved the French populace because, if evolution was nonteleological, “the lines demarcating individual organisms could no longer be easily drawn.”³⁸⁴ Beyond the comfort the late nineteenth-century public took in solid boundaries in general, the boundary between the human and the animal was of particular importance. To make this dividing line permeable was to turn the word upside down. Evolutionary theories were compounded by racist pseudosciences that created an evolutionary hierarchy of humans based on “race,” with Caucasians at the topmost level and non-whites at lower levels.³⁸⁵ With multiple levels of “animality” already present within the human species, everyone now seemed at risk for evolutionary regression. Scratch the surface of the human, and one could easily discover the “monkey” within.

By 1889, after the publications of three widely read treatises by Darwin and several archaeological discoveries that substantiated his theories, it would seem that

³⁸⁴ Martha Lucy, “Reading the Animal in Degas’s *Young Spartans*.”

³⁸⁵ Seitler, *Atavistic Tendencies*, 48-50. I have surrounded the word “race” in quotation marks to identify it as a social construct, as opposed to a biological fact.

literacy and artistic talent were among the few qualities that separated *Homo sapiens* from other animals. Morisot's concerns about humanity's simian origins, immediately following the artist's literary recommendations to her sister, doubtlessly bear immediate relation to her insistence that children read only intellectually engaging material. Morisot's own experience as an unmarried woman of ambition, intellect, and talent might have been one of frustration, but such frustration was a more acceptable outcome than a species-based regression that would produce socially unacceptable behavior. Although the books Julie read were odd choices for children, especially for girls, the larger context seems to suggest that such a deviation was a small price to pay for the parent concerned about lurking atavism in her child.

At the age of ten or eleven, Julie was five to six years from the perceived onset of puberty,³⁸⁶ after which the issues of courtship and marriage would assume a significant role in her life. As a bourgeois mother, she would then raise her children to continue the normative roles of their class and surround them with the cultural enrichment that, according to Pierre Larousse,³⁸⁷ only a woman could provide. While the eroding boundary between human and animal unnerved the majority of society, the upper classes must have felt even less at ease, given their association of "animal" characteristics with

³⁸⁶ Madge Garland, *The Changing Face of Childhood* (New York: October House, 1965), 171.

³⁸⁷ Pierre Larousse, "Famille," *Grand dictionnaire universel du XIXe siècle: français, historique, géographique, mythologique, bibliographique, littéraire, artistique, scientifique, etc., etc.*, vol. 8 (F-G) (Paris: Administration du grand Dictionnaire universel, 1866), 75, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k205360r>. Accessed August 16, 2015. My translation of "...une grande part dans l'éducation des enfants, de la fille surtout..." and "...la délicatesse, le goût, ce sentiment de l'art que la femme porte en tout et veut voir réalisé ou appliqué dans les objets et dans les êtres qui l'entourent."

the lower classes. For the sake of the class, decorum, and the wider culture, the suppression of the atavistic germ was a top priority.

Conclusion

Whether subtle or overt, the critical eye with which Cassatt and Morisot viewed contemporary normative gender roles plays a significant role in several of their works focusing on children and women. As demonstrated in Cassatt's oeuvre, normalization transformed the carefree child into the self-conscious adult in on endless mission to fit into tightly bound categories. Cassatt disrupts the formation of one category, that of gender, by capturing the process on canvas to expose it as a social construct and by revealing the child's difficulty as she is involuntarily molded into a heteronormative stereotype that will help to perpetuate the bourgeoisie. Disruption also appears in the form of the resistant child, who forms an alliance with an animal, sometimes striving to return to the animal self consciously abandoned by the ancestors of modern humans millions of years earlier. However, in an era in which evolutionary science and archaeological discoveries destabilized the classificatory boundaries between *Homo sapiens* and non-human animal, atavism was viewed more as a threat than as a refuge.

This sentiment toward atavism was especially true for the bourgeoisie, who equated atavistic qualities with criminals and the lower classes.³⁸⁸ This threat of evolutionary regression places Morisot's *Julie Manet Holding a Book*, as well as the artist's child-rearing philosophy, in an ambiguous position regarding heteronormative femininity. While sociocultural norms viewed Racine's tragedies as better suited for male

³⁸⁸ Anthea. Callen, *The Spectacular Body: Science, Method, and Meaning in the Work of Degas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 1–35.

readers, Morisot's language in her correspondence suggests her opposition to some established norms due to her belief that intellectual stimulation could prevent evolutionary regression. In other words, she chooses to fight the queerness of atavism with a more acceptable queerness embedded in "masculine" or "adult" reading material. At a time when the French bourgeoisie largely accepted Lamarckian arguments that environmentally acquired traits are passed from parent to child, informed parents would have accepted limited defiance of gender norms in the interest of preserving the future of their class and species.

Studying the queer in Cassatt's and Morisot's portraits of children reveals the responses to the normative constructs perpetuated by artists like Renoir. Idealized female sitters bearing expressions that deny the existence of their intelligence perpetuates a heteronormative fantasy that only recounts one particular viewpoint and, thus, only a portion of historical fact. Portraits of children and women that expose the constructed nature of gender norms, the psychic implications of those norms, and the dangers that such norms pose to the developing intellect inform the scholar of the complexities of late nineteenth-century culture.

FIGURES FOR CHAPTER THREE

Figure 1 Mary Cassatt. *Two Children at the Seashore (Children Playing on the Beach)*. 1884-85. Oil on canvas. 97.47 x 74.29cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

Figure 2 Mary Cassatt. *Woman and Child Driving*. 1881. Oil on canvas. 89.69 x 130.49cm. Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Figure 3 Mary Cassatt. *Mother and Child (Mother Wearing a Sunflower on Her Dress)*. 1905. Oil on canvas. 92.1 x 73.7cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

Figure 4 Mary Cassatt. *Mother and Child (Mother Wearing a Sunflower on Her Dress)*. Detail of child's reflection in wall mirror.

Figure 5 Mary Cassatt. *Mother and Child (Mother Wearing a Sunflower on Her Dress)*. Detail of child's reflection in hand mirror.

Figure 6 Mary Cassatt. *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair*. 1878. Oil on canvas. 89.5 x 129.8cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

Figure 7 Mary Cassatt. *Little Girl in a Blue Armchair*. Detail.

Figure 8 Edgar Degas. *Four Studies of a Dancer*. 1878-79. Chalk on paper. 47.2 x 58.5cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Figure 9 Edgar Degas. *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen*. 1878-81. Pigmented beeswax, clay, metal armature, rope, paintbrushes, human hair, silk and linen ribbon, cotton faille bodice, cotton and silk tutu, linen slippers, on wooden base. 98.9 x 34.7 x 35.2 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

Figure 10 Edgar Degas. *Hortense Valpinçon as a Child*. 1869-71. Oil on mattress ticking. 100 x 73cm. Minneapolis Institute of Art.

Figure 11 Edgar Degas. *Young Spartans*. 1880. Oil on canvas. 109.5 x 155cm. National Gallery, London.

Figure 12 Berthe Morisot. *Julie Manet Holding a Book*. 1889. Oil on canvas. 65 x 54cm. Private Collection.

CHAPTER FOUR:
NORMALIZATION AND ITS DISRUPTIONS, PART II:
QUEERING GENDER THROUGH CHILD’S PLAY

As the modern toy industry shaped childhood in the late nineteenth century, Cassatt and Morisot captured the effects of the phenomenon on bourgeois French and American children within the domestic sphere, a realm that includes home interiors, family gardens, and public spaces such as the Bois de Boulogne in Paris. The rapid growth of consumer culture in on both sides of the Atlantic capitalized on activities that had been nearly universal features of childhood for millennia. While girls at play feature more frequently in Impressionist works, at least one of Cassatt’s works on paper depicts her nephew with his toy sailboat.³⁸⁹

Scholarship on the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century toy markets—especially studies of the gender specificity of toys beyond dolls and soldiers—remains lacking. However, primary sources useful information for determining which toys were popular and understanding whether they were marketed to girls, boys, or both. Visual

³⁸⁹ Additionally, the oeuvres of Monet and Renoir contain several portraits of their sons engaged in activities, such as riding early models of tricycles and playing with toy blocks. Due to the scope of this chapter, these works will not be discussed.

culture, literature, and the antique market provide examples of the wide variety of toys available to children during the Third Republic and the Gilded Age. Portraits and prints depict both girls and boys playing with hobbyhorses, hoops and skimmers, and early models of tricycles in public and domestic locations. Models in fashion plates and urban guidebooks, for example, hold or play with dolls, toy sailboats, and hoops and skimmers as they model clothing or enact affluent childhood in public or domestic spaces.

Although commonly perceived as forms of entertainment, toys assumed a second role in the development of normative masculinity and femininity as children reached adulthood. According to a heteronormative agenda, boys learned the importance of aggression, competitiveness, and strategy, as well as the avoidance of sentimentality, by playing with toy soldiers and—of particular interest to this chapter—toy sailboats. Girls, on the other hand, developed and honed the skills they would require as women by playing with dolls. Fashionable and elegantly made-up “lady” dolls, which comprised the vast majority of all dolls produced in France before 1875, provided sartorial education and allowed girls to rehearse “tea parties and other adults activities.”³⁹⁰ Although most upper-class women continued to delegate many maternal duties to wet nurses and other domestic staff, Heywood points out children’s growing attachment to their mothers during the final quarter of the century.³⁹¹ Literature written during the Second Empire, which remained popular with children and adults, promoted “maternity as the only

³⁹⁰ Greg M. Thomas, “Impressionist Dolls: On the Commodification of Girlhood in Impressionist Painting,” in *Picturing Children: Constructions of Childhood between Rousseau and Freud*, ed. Marilyn Brown (Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate, 2002), 104.

³⁹¹ Colin Heywood, *Growing Up in France: From the Ancien Régime to the Third Republic* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 132.

possible female destiny.”³⁹² Perhaps it is no coincidence, then, that this era witnessed the increased production of baby dolls and depictions of girls practicing for motherhood with baby dolls.³⁹³ In households in which mothers involved themselves in their children’s lives, as was the case with Morisot and Julie, girls likely emulated actual maternal bonding in their doll play.

Gender-specific dynamics seemed like a perfect combination. However, some of the art produced during the final quarter of the nineteenth century and the literature that was popular with the children in the lives of the artists capture the less-than-ideal moments that occur between children and their normative toys, as will be demonstrated through Morisot’s *Young Girl with a Doll (Julie Manet)* (1884)³⁹⁴ and Cassatt’s *Robert and His Sailboat* (1882-83).³⁹⁵ If normative portraiture depicts idealized (albeit often unrealistic) children happily conforming to the standards that will yield heterosexually reproducing adults, portraiture that captures deviations that threaten this teleology is queer. When the visual record and occasional references in secondary sources largely convey toy sailboats as “boys’” toys, depictions of girls playing with toy sailboats require explorations into the degree to which such playtime activities were accepted. This issue will be addressed through *Eugène Manet and His Daughter in the Garden* (1883)³⁹⁶ and

³⁹² Valérie C. Lastinger, “Of Dolls and Girls in Nineteenth-Century France,” *Children’s Literature* 21, no. 1 (1993): 20, doi:10.1353/chl.0.0411.

³⁹³ Thomas, “Impressionist Dolls,” 104–105.

³⁹⁴ Berthe Morisot, *Young Girl with a Doll (Julie Manet)*, 1884, oil on canvas, 82 x 100 cm, private collection. Color image available at <http://www.the-athenaeum.org/art/detail.php?ID=1702>.

³⁹⁵ Mary Cassatt, *Robert and His Sailboat*, 1882-83, pastel on paper, 63.98 x 48.9cm, private collection.

³⁹⁶ Morisot, *Eugène Manet and His Daughter in the Garden*, 1883, oil on canvas, 60 x 73cm, private collection.

Woman and Child in a Garden (1884).³⁹⁷ By deploying theories of the queer child as Stockton posits, and the psychoanalytic approaches of Freud, Melanie Klein, Lacan, and Winnicott, this chapter will demonstrate how the constructs of heteronormative teleologies and gender-based norms queer children's playtime in the works of Cassatt and Morisot.

Portrait of the Artist's Daughter as the "Bad Mother"

Morisot's oeuvre contains many portraits of young girls, mainly Julie and her cousins, with their dolls in a variety of contexts. Most commonly, the girls treat their dolls either as their children or as accessories. As children of the bourgeoisie, their parents had the means to purchase everything on the market from the most expensive, yet very delicate, porcelain or bisque dolls that were better suited for sedentary display to less expensive, yet comparatively durable, rag dolls that were better suited for active outdoor play.³⁹⁸

This section focuses on *Young Girl with a Doll (Julie Manet)* (fig. 1), a portrait of Julie holding a porcelain or bisque doll. Here, Julie sits in an armchair that betrays her small stature. As she sits with her back against the back of the chair, her legs extend in front of her, making it impossible to bend her knees at a ninety-degree angle and attempt to plant her feet on the floor. She wears a predominantly black outfit. Her facial features are clearly visible, allowing the viewer to discern her expressionless countenance. To reinforce this sense of seriousness, she purses her lips and fails to engage the viewer,

³⁹⁷ Morisot, *Woman and Child in a Garden*, 1884, oil on canvas, 59cm x 72cm, Scottish National Gallery, Edinburgh.

³⁹⁸ Leslie Daiken, *Children's Toys throughout the Ages*. (New York: Praeger, 1953), 111.

instead looking past him or her. She clutches a doll that faces front, allowing the viewer to discern that it is of an older girl. The visibility of the doll's face and the frontal view of its clothing allow the viewer to see the similarities it bears to Julie, as a child to its mother.

In addition to “hands-on” lessons from adults and peers, girls learned the importance of caring for their inanimate charges through literature. One such example is Comtesse Sophie de Ségur's novel *Les Malheurs de Sophie* (1858), whose title character meets with a series of misfortunes as a consequence of her own carelessness. The novel opens with a story documenting several instances of unintended neglect of a wax doll that the protagonist's absent father sends to her from Paris. Not understanding the fragility of wax, Sophie, personifying her doll and perceiving “her” as “feeling” cold, places “her” in the window in direct contact with the warmth of the sun. Sophie's mother warns her that the sun's “heat will make it [the doll] soft,” but Sophie insists that the wax is as “hard as wood” and proceeds to welcome her friends into the house. When she leads her friends to the window to see the doll, they notice that the wax has begun to melt, causing the doll's eyes to sink into its head, giving it the appearance of being “blind” (*aveugle*). Sophie's mother manages to repair the doll, prompting her daughter's gratitude. However, Sophie fails to learn from her mistakes and proceeds to give her doll a bath, curl its hair, and tie strings to its arms and carry it like a marionette. As a result, the doll suffers further damage, leaving Sophie no choice but to bury it like a dead body.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁹ Sophie de Ségur, *Les Malheurs de Sophie*, 13th ed. (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1880), 6–13. My translations of “...la chaleur la rendra molle” and “...elle est dure comme du bois.”

The story serves as a lesson to its young female readers that “maternal” neglect can have “deadly” consequences. Wax was a common material in nineteenth-century dolls, making Ségur’s cautionary tale particularly relevant. The delicate nature of wax could be likened to the fragility of a child’s body, warning future mothers to avoid any good intentions that could bring about dangerous results. On the other hand, as Valérie Lastinger argues, the “harm” that Sophie inflicts on the doll could be the result of jealousy. The child and her toy wear similar simple, “Rousseauistic” dresses, but the doll “achieves an elegance through details of finery that must exasperate Sophie’s aspirations,”⁴⁰⁰ a phenomenon that continues into the present day with girls of all ages “torturing” and “mutilating” their dolls.⁴⁰¹ As the mother of eight children who began writing to educate and entertain her grandchildren, Ségur recorded her observations of behavior and customs within her class to which her readers could relate.⁴⁰² Many scholars of her work point out her departure from the norms of presenting idealized, yet unrealistic, plots.⁴⁰³ Eugenia Gonzalez goes one step farther by pointing directly to many

⁴⁰⁰ Lastinger, “Of Dolls and Girls in Nineteenth-Century France,” 29.

⁴⁰¹ Courtney Lee Weida, “Gender, Aesthetics, and Sexuality in Play: Uneasy Lessons from Girls’ Dolls, Action Figures, and Television Programs,” *The Journal of Social Theory in Art Education (Online)* 31 (2011): 12.

⁴⁰² Claire-Lise Malarte-Feldman, “La Comtesse de Ségur, a Witness of Her Time,” *Children’s Literature Association Quarterly* 20, no. 3 (1995): 135, doi:10.1353/chq.0.0906.

⁴⁰³ Marie-France Doray and Margaret R. Higonnet, “Cleanliness and Class in the Countess de Ségur’s Novels,” *Children’s Literature* 17, no. 1 (1989): 64–80, doi:10.1353/chl.0.0221; Claudine A. Giacchetti, “Figures du Père Dans Les Romans de La Comtesse de Ségur,” *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 38, no. 1 (2009): 24–38, doi:10.1353/ncf.0.0112; C. Giacchetti, “Illustrating Segur (19th-Century French Children’s Literature),” *Neophilologus* 85, no. 3 (July 2001): 369–84, doi:10.1023/A:1010328906223; Lastinger, “Of Dolls and Girls in Nineteenth-Century France”; Valérie C. Lastinger, “Le Sang des Cerises: L’écriture de La Féminité Chez Sophie de Ségur,” *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 26, no. 1/2 (1997): 133–45; Malarte-Feldman, “La Comtesse de Ségur, a Witness of Her Time.”

girls' "smashing, mutilating, or even arranging funerals for the perfect little bodies with which they were supposed to have tea."⁴⁰⁴ Therefore, a girl's resentment toward her doll and the seemingly unintended consequences of that resentment are realistic possibilities to consider in the analysis of Morisot's work and similar depictions that appear in contemporaneous visual culture.

In *Young Girl with a Doll*, Julie impersonally tucks the doll into the crook of her right arm while tensing her left arm and seemingly clenching her left hand. She directs her expressionless gaze past the viewer as if focusing her thoughts elsewhere. Whether Julie's expression and clenched fist suggest subtle anger and a possible prelude to the "abuse" of her doll is a matter of conjecture. What the viewer can determine is that this portrait is hardly a portrayal of "maternal" love. Rather, Julie treats her doll as no better than an accessory that she refuses to acknowledge. This behavior contrasts with a portrait that Morisot painted of Julie and her baby doll the previous year (fig. 2),⁴⁰⁵ in which the child cradles her would-be child with affection. As Ségur's novel arguably captures the reality of a girl's resentment toward her doll, Morisot's portrait could do the same.

If Morisot's portrait does portray resentment, the older "age" of Julie's doll could be a contributing factor. In addition to the nurturing qualities that doll play helps young girls to develop, The history of the doll points to another significant role that it plays in the formation of normative femininity according to conventional wisdom. While dolls resembling babies and older children date to ancient times, dolls produced in Paris during

⁴⁰⁴ Eugenia Gonzalez, "'I Sometimes Think She Is a Spy on All My Actions': Dolls, Girls, and Disciplinary Surveillance in the Nineteenth-Century Doll Tale," *Children's Literature* 39, no. 1 (2011): 34.

⁴⁰⁵ Morisot, *Young Girl with a Doll (Julie Manet)*, 1883, oil on canvas, 73.03 x 70.17cm, private collection.

the nineteenth century figured widely in the fashion industry, which explains the dominance of “adult types” until the mid-1870s.⁴⁰⁶ As such, by playing with such “lady” dolls, girls learned how to dress, style their hair, and wear cosmetics as they prepared for their roles as bourgeois wives and mothers. However, while the young girl’s use of dolls as models for adult life would seem to shape the normatively feminine woman, we must remember that doll play involves education based on a manufactured image of womanhood, and not actual women.

A compelling exposure of artifice involving dolls unfolds in a painting not by Morisot, but, rather one of her contemporaries and close friends. As Degas depicts in *Portrait of Henri Michel-Lévy* (1878),⁴⁰⁷ the title subject stands in his studio between two depictions of *al fresco* bourgeois leisure and next to a female figure that sits against the wall. On close inspection of the “woman’s” face, the viewer learns that the figure is actually a mannequin, a life-size doll. In front of Michel-Lévy sits an open box holding his paintbrushes and paint-smeared palette. The painting on the wall perpendicular to him portrays a female figure—in fact, the mannequin—lounging against a tree. In an era when artists largely preferred to paint outdoor scenes *en plein air*,⁴⁰⁸ Michel-Lévy’s surroundings inform the viewer that the artist produced his outdoor scenes in an interior location. As another element of artifice, a female sitter in at least one of his paintings is merely a surrogate for a human being yet is depicted on canvas as a model of bourgeois

⁴⁰⁶ Thomas, “Impressionist Dolls,” 103–104.

⁴⁰⁷ Edgar Degas, *Portrait of Henri Michel-Lévy*, 1878, oil on canvas, 40 x 28cm, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon.

⁴⁰⁸ Anthea Callen, *The Art of Impressionism: Painting Technique and the Making of Modernity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 8–10.

femininity.⁴⁰⁹ Nevertheless, the overlap between the mannequin's elbow and the paintbrushes underscores its status on canvas as a creation of the artist in his “imitation of an imitation of reality.”⁴¹⁰

Just as a male painter produced manufactured femininity on canvas, men composed a significant percentage—if not the majority—of well-known doll makers in nineteenth-century Europe. Manufacturers such as Casimir Bru, François Gaultier, Pierre-François Jumeau, Jules Steiner, and Anericho Cephas “Henry” Pierotti⁴¹¹ produced the most lifelike dolls available to bourgeois households. Such dolls, like Michel-Lévy’s mannequin, represented an ideal that girls and women were expected to emulate. However, because the level of idealization was difficult, if not impossible, for living girls to follow, many children likely found themselves frustrated like the fictional Sophie, resulting in less than ideal treatment of their dolls.⁴¹²

If exasperation toward the unachievable idea contributes to apathy toward and “abuse” of “lady” dolls, how are we to explain such treatment of baby dolls? One possible answer can be found in the case studies of Melanie Klein. During the Oedipal phase,⁴¹³ the super-ego forms and rapidly gains strength, threatening to “devour” the “still

⁴⁰⁹ Thomas, “Impressionist Dolls,” 104.

⁴¹⁰ Theodore Reff, *Degas: The Artist's Mind* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1976), 129.

⁴¹¹ Thomas, “Impressionist Dolls,” 103; “Pierotti Doll,” *Victoria and Albert Museum of Childhood*, 2014, <http://www.vam.ac.uk/moc/article/pierotti-doll/>.

⁴¹² The phenomenon of doll “abuse” continues into the present day with girls’ mutilation of Barbie dolls over the poor body image created by the unachievable ideal that the dolls present. See Louise Collins et al., “We’re Not Barbie Girls: Tweens Transform a Feminine Icon,” *Feminist Formations* 24, no. 1 (2012): 104.

⁴¹³ Klein locates the Oedipal phase of development between the ages of one and two, whereas Freud locates it between the ages of three and six. See Melanie Klein, “Early Stages of the Oedipus Conflict,” in *The Selected Melanie Klein*, ed. Juliet Mitchell (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 69–83; Sigmund Freud, “The Development of the Libido

very feeble ego” if the latter fails to repress the child’s sadistic desires against the maternal body involving penetration and removal of objects like feces and children. Girls, according to Klein, see their mother as competition for their father’s affections before they overcome the Oedipus complex.⁴¹⁴ Sadistic urges mark the child’s “first and basic relation to the outside world and to reality.” As the super-ego develops, the child exhibits noticeable anxiety (fear of punishment) soon after committing sadistic acts toward dolls or other toys. In order to overcome this phase of the Oedipus complex, Klein argues that the child must “acquire an external world which corresponds to reality” as opposed to the realm of fantasy that includes such fanciful attacks against the mother.⁴¹⁵ Interestingly, the acting out of sadistic impulses on inanimate objects allows the child to form symbolic connections between these objects and the mother or whomever the child wishes (consciously or unconsciously) to harm. These connections, in turn, improve the child’s “relation to the external world and to reality.” Without a healthy integration into the external world, the child risks developing schizophrenia.⁴¹⁶

Winnicott also notes the importance of dolls and other soft toys, which he categorizes as “transitional objects.” Transitional objects help children cope with the process of weaning by replacing the breast and allowing them to evolve successfully

and the Sexual Organizations,” in *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977), 329–338.

⁴¹⁴ Klein’s approach to the Oedipus Complex was based on Freud’s approach. See Freud, “Femininity,” in *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton, 1965), 99–119.

⁴¹⁵ Klein, “The Psycho-Analytic Play Technique: Its History and Significance,” in *The Selected Melanie Klein*, 52, 71, 73.

⁴¹⁶ Melanie Klein, “The Importance of Symbol Formation in the Development of the Ego,” in *The Selected Melanie Klein*, 98.

“from the purely subjective to objectivity.”⁴¹⁷ The subjective phase corresponds to Lacan’s Real order, in which nursing children have no concept of the external world, envisioning their mothers’ bodies (or similar sources of nourishment) as extensions of themselves and possessing a sense of omnipotence when crying results in the fulfillment of their needs. Objectivity develops upon recognition of the external world, beginning with the Lacanian mirror stage, in which children see their reflections and perceive themselves as whole beings, separate from the sources of their nourishment.⁴¹⁸

Although dolls help children to cope with the difficulties that occur during the developments of the ego and super-ego, the dominant culture of the nineteenth century used dolls, both as physical toys and as literary figures, as tools of surveillance in the normalization of girls in the English- and French-speaking worlds.⁴¹⁹ Cultural authorities in France and the United States designated mothers as the overseers of their daughters’ education and normalization.⁴²⁰ Gonzalez cites the manuals of Sarah Stickney Ellis, who encouraged mothers to turn away from corporal punishment in favor of “gentle...influence and careful surveillance.” Ellis adopts panoptical language by arguing that girls’ compliance would be assured even in the absence of the mother or similar figure of authority. If administered correctly and successfully, the child would acquiesce to normative behavior with ease and without complaint. By the second half of the

⁴¹⁷ D. W Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (New York: Basic Books, 1971), 6.

⁴¹⁸ Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, 1-14; and Lacan, “The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience,” in *Ecrits*, second edition of *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, 1163-1169.

⁴¹⁹ Gonzalez, “I Sometimes Think She Is a Spy on All My Actions,” 35.

⁴²⁰ Gonzalez, “I Sometimes Think She Is a Spy on All My Actions,” 35; Pierre Larousse, “Famille,” *Grand dictionnaire universel du XIXe siècle: Français, historique, géographique, mythologique, bibliographique, littéraire, artistique, scientifique, etc., etc.*, vol. 8 (F-G) (Paris: Administration du grand Dictionnaire universel, 1872), 75, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k205360r>.

nineteenth century, the doll's role in the surveillance of normalization had been thoroughly incorporated into the culture.⁴²¹

This period also witnessed the introduction of dolls, such as those designed by Jumeau, whose skin, eyes, and hair looked increasingly lifelike. Steiner's invention of eyes that could open and close and voice mechanisms that uttered "*maman*" and "*papa*" compounded upon this lifelikeness.⁴²² Wealthy families could afford to commission individualized dolls, as was the case with a small number of dolls in the Victoria and Albert Museum. For example, a Pierotti "lady" doll in the collection was modeled after the likeness of an English aristocrat whose granddaughter gave the doll to Queen Victoria in the final years of her reign. Human hair is among the materials used in its production.⁴²³ A Pierotti child doll (fig. 4), which wears a dress once owned by an English child in the 1870s, also contains human hair that might have been cut from the heads of the Pierotti children.⁴²⁴ Such lifelike qualities, at least in the realm of fiction, had the power to convince girls that they (the dolls) were watching the girls' every move and could report back to mother.⁴²⁵

The capacities of dolls as aids in psychosexual development and tools of normalization play a role in the context of *Young Girl with a Doll*. Julie, although past the

⁴²¹ Gonzalez, "I Sometimes Think She Is a Spy on All My Actions," 35–36. Quoted material is Gonzalez's.

⁴²² Thomas, "Impressionist Dolls," 103.

⁴²³ Anericho Cephas "Henry" Pierotti, *Doll*, 1900, wax, cloth, glass, human hair, Museum of Childhood, Victoria and Albert Museum, London. <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1131643/doll-pierotti/?print=1>, accessed May 16 2015.

⁴²⁴ Pierotti, *Young Girl Doll*, wax, cloth, glass, cow hair, human hair, Museum of Childhood, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/moc/article/pierotti-doll/>, accessed May 16, 2015.

⁴²⁵ Gonzalez, "I Sometimes Think She Is a Spy on All My Actions," 42.

Kleinian period of the Oedipus complex, is near the end of the Freudian range. The fear of punishment that arises during this phase of development coincides with the panoptical role that dolls served during her childhood. Her dolls helped her to relate to the external world but also possessed a degree of lifelikeness that might have given her the impression that they were spying on her. No longer in the sadistic phase of “abusing” her dolls, she now begins to acquiesce to her normalization. However, for reasons possibly grounded in psychosexual development or in the culture of the time, her body language and facial expression suggest a lack of conformity to the normative ideal of a doting future mother on her artificial child.

In addition to psychoanalytic theory, the historical context of visual culture could also explain the emotional distance that Julie places between herself and her doll. Their facial and sartorial similarities recall a device commonly found in contemporary fashion plates depicting mothers and daughters. As Higonnet and Anne Schirrmeister demonstrate, many of Morisot’s paintings bear striking parallels to contemporary fashion plates, indicating frequent exposure to and obvious influence from these popular publications.⁴²⁶ The early 1880s marked a turning point in the fashion industry with periodicals, such as *La Mode Illustrée*, beginning to promote loose-fitting clothing that allowed young girls more freedom of movement, a significant departure from conventions that depicted girls over the age of seven as smaller clones of their mothers.

⁴²⁶ Anne Higonnet, *Berthe Morisot’s Images of Women* (Harvard University Press, 1994), 84–122; Anne Schirrmeister, “La Dernière Mode: Berthe Morisot and Costume,” in *Perspectives on Morisot*, ed. T. J. Edelstein (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1990), 103–115.

While most French- and English-language publications quickly followed suit,⁴²⁷ their fashion plates occasionally continued to depict mother-daughter pairs wearing clothing with similarities in such features as color harmonies or sewn linear designs. For example, Madge Garland notes that periodicals such as the *Journal des Modes* “continued to reflect the increasing elaboration of grown-up styles” for young girls.⁴²⁸ A plate from *Le Journal des demoiselles* (December 1884) (fig. 5) illustrates Garland’s assertion with its depiction of a mother and a daughter in earth-toned dresses with wide vertical lines of darker values establishing the center of each bodice as its focal point. In other words, although these new changes emerged to accommodate increasingly active young girls, the tradition of daughters’ emulation of their mothers was already established.

Although girls’ and women’s fashions were becoming distinct categories when Morisot painted these portraits of Julie with her dolls, stylistic likenesses in the clothing of mothers and daughters did not disappear instantly. This information, when applied to the similarities in attire between Julie and her doll, may suggest another pseudo mother-daughter relationship. Julie’s black eyes, red lips, and smooth skin that give her a face a doll-like quality prompt an additional resemblance between “mother” and “daughter,” thereby strengthening the evidence that such a relationship links the child to the inanimate object. Although Julie’s impersonal treatment of her doll in this pseudo mother-daughter relationship might clash with normative ideals of womanhood depicted in the literary and pedagogical culture of the time, it actually conforms to presumed

⁴²⁷ JoAnne Olian, “Introduction: La Mode Illustrée,” in *Children’s Fashions, 1860-1912: 1,065 Costume Designs from “La Mode Illustrée,”* ed. JoAnne Olian (Toronto: General Publishing Company, 1994), iv.

⁴²⁸ Madge Garland, *The Changing Face of Childhood* (New York: October House, 1965), 166.

mother-daughter interactions in French fashion plates. Karen Bohleke points out that these maternal models “look elsewhere or even turn their backs.”⁴²⁹ Although Bohleke uses examples from the 1850s, fashion plate illustrators continued to depict little to no mother-child interaction into the 1880s. A plate from *Revue de la Mode* (1880) (fig. 6) depicts a young mother in a ball gown conversing with a second woman dressed in formal attire better suited for domestic wear. The gesture of the mother’s left hand directs the viewer’s attention to a child reaching up to hand her a small bouquet of roses that match the accents on the older woman’s dress. Despite the implied lines that connect mother and child, the mother’s attention is focused on the second woman, presumably the child’s governess or nanny who will tend to her while her parents are away.

Higonnet and Schirrmeister draw parallels between the disconnected relationships between mothers and children in fashion plates and similar relationships that appear in Morisot’s oeuvre.⁴³⁰ However, such lack of mother-child engagement in fashion plates were often due to the “contrived poses” that stemmed from the objectives of engravers and periodical editors to emphasize specific details of the clothing on display.⁴³¹ Furthermore, Julie’s seemingly clenched fist suggests a sense of aggression (albeit subdued) that is absent from her mother’s depictions of mothers and children. Although her disengagement from her doll might be healthy in terms of her psychosexual development and similar to the conventions of models in fashion plates, it remains queer

⁴²⁹ Karin J. Bohleke, “Americanizing French Fashion Plates: ‘Godey’s’ and ‘Peterson’s’ Cultural and Socio-Economic Translation of ‘Les Modes Parisiennes,’” *American Periodicals* 20, no. 2 (January 1, 2010): 124.

⁴³⁰ Higonnet, *Berthe Morisot’s Images of Women*; Schirrmeister, “La Dernière Mode.”

⁴³¹ Bohleke, “Americanizing French Fashion Plates,” 121.

in relation to the normative idealized image of future motherhood in the dominant culture of the nineteenth century.

These portraits, in which Julie seems to engage in the common childhood activity of “playing house,” appear to capture the mythical innocence⁴³² of childhood, in which most girls indoctrinated into Western patriarchal culture treat their dolls like their own offspring. Nevertheless, the expectation that children behave like seemingly heteronormative adults while maintaining their imagined innocence during playtime destabilizes conceptions of childhood commonly accepted as truths. Stockton’s discussion of the queer child notes children’s tendency to substitute inanimate objects for human beings, such as referring to one’s “dolly” as one’s “child” as a means of “reconceiv[ing] relations to time.”⁴³³ In other words, adopting a parental role toward one’s doll copes with the heteronormative teleology of childhood by acting out that future expectation in the present with a manufactured substitute for a living infant. On its surface, such language seems normative, assuming innocence on the part of the speaker. However, the maternal education involved in playing with baby dolls suggests a future necessitating sexual intercourse, thus contravening the construct of innocence. Furthermore, children who refer to or treat their dolls as their offspring imply that they have reproduced without sexual intercourse and have thus deviated from heteronormativity. In other words, although Western patriarchal norms encourage girls to play with dolls sharpen their skills as nurturers, the pseudo-maternal roles that young

⁴³² In the nineteenth-century context, innocence was a state of ignorance, in which the child possessed no awareness of adult matters, such as gender or sexuality. This belief was based on John Locke’s theory of the child as a blank slate at birth. See Chapter Two for more details.

⁴³³ Stockton, *The Queer Child*, 15.

girls assume in the process defy their supposedly innocent states, as well as heteronormativity itself.

Boys and Their Toys

Despite belonging to the same social class as Morisot and producing portraits of equally privileged individuals, Cassatt produced very few depictions of children either posing with toys or engaged in active play. Of the available works listed in the most comprehensive *catalogue raisonné*,⁴³⁴ none of her paintings or works on paper includes girls or boys with dolls. The small number of depictions of children at play comprises toddlers playing in sand, an older sister handing a toy to her infant sibling, pre-adolescent girls playing cards, and the artist's nephew Robert examining his toy sailboat—the last of which is the focus of this section (fig. 7). Here, he sits at what appears to be a dining table examining the assembly of his toy sailboat. Unlike Julie Manet, who looks past the viewer, the young Cassatt directs his pensive gaze to the left side of the picture plane, intently fixated on the object in his possession.

Age nine or ten when he sat for this drawing, Robert was two to three years into his *deuxième enfance*. For boys, this second phase of childhood marked the beginning of gender differentiation and the initial stage of heteronormative manhood. When boys reached the age of seven, their parents cut their hair and began dressing them in shirts and knee breeches,⁴³⁵ as is evidenced in a plate featuring children's fashions in the July 1883

⁴³⁴ Catherine Rogers, ed., and the Adelson Galleries, *Mary Cassatt: A New Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings, Pastels, and Watercolors Originally Published by Adelyn Dohme Breeskin*, last updated 2015. <http://www.marycassatt.com/>. MaryCassatt.com is the most extensive catalogue of Cassatt's works that I have researched to date.

⁴³⁵ Heywood, *Growing Up in France*, 79–80.

issue of *Peterson's Magazine* (fig. 8), one of the top American women's periodicals, which featured fashion plates adapted from popular contemporary French periodicals,⁴³⁶ denoting a transatlantic popularity in children's clothing with maritime themes.

The boys in the *Peterson's* plate also wear sailor suits and hold either a toy sailboat or oars to complete the maritime theme. The second half of the century witnessed increased popularity of the sailor suit for children in Robert's age group after Franz Winterhalter painted the portrait of the four year-old Prince of Wales (1846) (fig. 9) wearing a smaller and more simplified version of the Royal Navy's new uniform. In the following years and decades, American publishers copied the design in domestic fashion plates, spreading the popularity of the outfit to bourgeois families across the country. In the era of empire building, naval power had taken its place as a powerful force that allowed the United Kingdom to establish colonies around the world, becoming the largest and most powerful empire in history. In 1890, Alfred Thayer Mahan attributed this feat to the power and seafaring expertise of the Royal Navy.⁴³⁷ The association of the sailor suit with the military might of the most powerful navy in the world made the outfit popular among young boys growing up in post-Civil War America, where a new culture of hyper-masculinity was on the rise with the objective of combating the "feminizing" influence that mothers had on their sons in the antebellum years.⁴³⁸ Women and "the feminine" were simultaneously lauded and vilified for their "civilizing" capabilities, preventing

⁴³⁶ Bohleke, "Americanizing French Fashion Plates," 120–155.

⁴³⁷ Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1890).

⁴³⁸ David Morgan, "Renegotiating Masculinity after the Civil War: Absent Fathers and Women with Beards: Religion and Gender in Popular Imagery of the Nineteenth Century," in *American Visual Cultures*, ed. David Holloway and John Beck (New York: Continuum, 2005), 39–47.

boys and young men from fostering their machismo. However, American feminism and the suffragist movement, stronger and more visible than their French counterparts, came under increased criticism for the “threat” they posed to masculinity.⁴³⁹ Therefore, the performance of heteronormative masculinity became increasingly important for American boys.

Prints from the second half of the nineteenth century depict young boys gathering at public fountains or small bodies of water in public parks with their toy sailboats to compete in simulated yacht races or sea battles, as if preparing for the expectations that awaited them as adults. One example is Pellerin’s *Les Jeux d’enfance, No. 2* (1859)⁴⁴⁰ (fig. 10), a lithograph composed of eight representations of playtime activities popular with nineteenth-century children. Of the four panels that depict gender-segregated activities, the panel entitled *Les Petits bateaux* (*Little Boats*) portrays three boys engaged in sailing their toy sailboats in a public reflecting pool. Two boys allow their smaller, simpler sailboats to float in the background while they focus their attention on a third boy’s larger and more elaborate battleship that he pushes toward the interior of the pool.

When considering the queerness of Cassatt’s drawing, background plays a significant role. Although the wall against which Robert sits bears no windows or ornamentation to mark it as a specific room, his decorative wooden chair and the wooden table that contains his toy sailboat inform the viewer that the portrait is set in an interior location, that is, within the domestic sphere. By contrast, the Winterhalter portrait and

⁴³⁹ Nina Baym, “Melodramas of Beset Manhood: How Theories of American Fiction Exclude Women Authors,” in *Criticism: Major Statements*, ed. Charles Kaplan and William Davis Anderson (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000), 45. See Chapter One for a more in-depth discussion of the topic of masculinity.

⁴⁴⁰ Pellerin, *Les Jeux d’enfance, No. 2*, 1859, polychromatic lithograph, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b6938308h>.

Les Petits bateaux are clearly set in an outdoor—public—location. The absence of a specific background in the *Peterson*'s plate leaves open the possibility that the children pose in a public place. For a boy in his *deuxième enfance*, Robert's adoption of heteronormative masculinity assumed a high priority. Given the gendering of spheres during the nineteenth century, a boy approaching adulthood would have been expected to avoid extended periods of time in the domestic sphere and focus his attention to matters of the public sphere. Likewise, a toy that symbolized competitiveness and power would seem best suited for public locations where boys could, as in *Les Petits bateaux*, sharpen the skills and behavior that they would require as men. For the late nineteenth-century culture of "manliness," a domestic setting was a queer choice to depict a boy with his toy sailboat.

With their context of "manly" toughness, military-style toys like sailboats were popular choices for boys of the upper middle class.⁴⁴¹ For Robert, who spent a significant amount of time in Paris in the early 1880s,⁴⁴² the competitive spirit of yacht racing likely factored into the normalizing influence of toy sailboats. As the son of Alexander Cassatt, the former vice president of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and Lois Buchanan Cassatt, the niece of President James Buchanan,⁴⁴³ Robert was likely aware of the competitiveness deemed essential not only for success in the *laissez-faire* capitalist environment of Gilded-Age America but also for effective conformity to the image of the

⁴⁴¹ Daiken, *Children's Toys throughout the Ages*, 94.

⁴⁴² Greg M. Thomas, *Impressionist Children: Childhood, Family, and Modern Identity in French Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 82–83.

⁴⁴³ Michael Bezilla, "Cassatt, Alexander Johnston," *American National Biography Online*, February 2000, <http://www.anb.org/articles/10/10-00269.html>.

heteronormatively masculine man.⁴⁴⁴ Several years later, he would enroll in the Haverford School, formerly a Quaker college outside Philadelphia that his parents helped to reform into a private business school for the sons of newly relocated wealthy families after the Pennsylvania Railroad extended its service to connect the city of Philadelphia to its rural environs.⁴⁴⁵ According to the institution's website, its values of "[a]cademic rigor... athletic prowess... civic and community service," date to its reform in 1884.⁴⁴⁶ This short list provides an idea of the quality of education Robert would receive during his adolescence.

In addition to the academic and service-learning components anticipated in such an environment, Robert was expected to develop his abilities in sports. The years following the Civil War and the Franco-Prussian War witnessed a growing fear that sedentary lifestyles, most prevalent among the middle classes, would destroy heteronormative masculinity. Almost in response, physical fitness assumed a central role in American culture during the final quarter of the century. Men's active participation in sports such as golf, rowing, and tennis joined the existing popularity of spectator sports. More importantly, athletic engagement was championed for its fostering of "masculine" values such as "individualism, aggressiveness, and competition."⁴⁴⁷ By the turn of the century, future United States president Theodore Roosevelt numbered among many

⁴⁴⁴ Geert Hofstede, *Masculinity and Femininity: The Taboo Dimension of National Cultures* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998), 118.

⁴⁴⁵ "History and Tradition," *The Haverford School: A Nonsectarian College Preparatory Day School for Boys, Grades JrK-12*, accessed April 4, 2015, <http://www.haverford.org/about-us/history-tradition/index.aspx>.

⁴⁴⁶ "Living Legacies," *The Haverford School: A Nonsectarian College Preparatory Day School for Boys, Grades JrK-12*, accessed April 4, 2015, <http://www.haverford.org/about-us/history-tradition/legacy/index.aspx>.

⁴⁴⁷ Shrock, *The Gilded Age*, 137-147.

prominent voices advocating active lifestyles in American boys, especially white boys of the ruling classes to prevent sedentary “effeminacy” from destroying the country.⁴⁴⁸

Given this context, the Cassatts and the officials who worked with them to reform Haverford either embraced the value of physical education or acknowledged the increasingly accepted links between physical education and the molding of boys into successful competent leaders.

The promotion of activity in boys’ lives manifests in the rendering of *Les Petits bateaux* that appears in *Les Jeux d’enfance*. The locations of the smaller boats near the edge of the pool suggest that their owners have only recently placed them in the water. Their owners’ diagonally oriented poses, as well as the location of one boy’s hat on the ground, suggest that they have hurried, possibly run, to the foreground to see their companion’s (or, better yet, competitor’s) ship. In other words, the boys, conveying a clear sense of “masculine” activity (as opposed to “feminine” passivity), embody the competitive spirit whose significance would grow more prominent as industrialization increased.

In addition to activity and competition, Robert would have been encouraged to adopt a “masculine” unemotional attitude and a mind for strategy if he were to follow his father as an industry leader. In fact, a letter that Robert’s paternal grandfather wrote to the then-eight year-old makes a brief reference to the future, “when [he] grow[s] up to be a man.” The same letter also mentions a “vessel,” possibly the boat in Cassatt’s drawing,

⁴⁴⁸ Julia Grant, “A ‘Real Boy’ and Not a Sissy: Gender, Childhood, and Masculinity, 1890-1940,” *Journal of Social History* 37, no. 4 (July 1, 2004): 831–832.

which the grandparents gave the boy for Christmas.⁴⁴⁹ Apparently, the aspirations of his elders were at least beginning to manifest as his aunt drew his portrait.

One or two years after Robert sat for this pastel drawing, he also posed with his father in double portrait painted by Cassatt.⁴⁵⁰ As in the pastel, an unsmiling Robert ignores the viewer, staring straight ahead with his diagonally aligned eyebrows betraying a suggestion of uneasiness. Family correspondence points to the child's aversion to posing for the hours involved in the production of a portrait. One month after the completion of the double portrait, his paternal grandmother would recall his "wriggling about like a flea" during sittings.⁴⁵¹ Such impatience and distaste for extended periods of motionless sitting would seem natural for pre-adolescent boys that popular novels portrayed as energetic. However, popular child-rearing manuals warned bourgeois parents about the "boy problem."⁴⁵² Although campaigns against "idleness" and sedentary lifestyles would seem to conflict with calm behavior, Gilded-Age American men were encouraged to adopt self-control and err on the side of emotional restraint.⁴⁵³ Just as girls were expected to conform to nearly impossible ideals, boys were expected to maintain a nearly impossible balance between aggressiveness and emotional restraint.

In Cassatt's drawing, Robert appears to conform to the composed behavior

⁴⁴⁹ Robert Cassatt (Sr.), Letter to Robert Kelso Cassatt, January 1, 1882, Mary Cassatt Letters, 1882-1926: Digitized Collection, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, <http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/container/viewer/Cassatt-Robert-494483>.

⁴⁵⁰ Cassatt, *Portrait of Alexander J. Cassatt and His Son, Robert Kelso Cassatt*, 1884, oil on canvas, 100.3 x 81.3cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art, <http://www.philamuseum.org/collections/permanent/104479.html>.

⁴⁵¹ Katherine Kelso Johnston Cassatt, letter to Katharine Cassatt, January 21, 1885, reprinted in Mathews, *Cassatt and Her Circle*, 187.

⁴⁵² The "boy problem," seen as a result of increasing urbanization of the American landscape, included symptoms such as a lack of self-reliance, physical weakness, and "unruly character." For more details, see Chapter One.

⁴⁵³ See Chapter One for a more in-depth discussion of character.

expected of him, resisting the temptation to resort to his typical rambunctious self. Nevertheless, several factors point to his deviation from established norms governing conduct in the bourgeois boy undergoing normalization. His slight betrayal of a frown could suggest a sense of apprehension, and, thus, his failure to suppress emotion. On the other hand, his frown could be the result of contemplation—the hallmark of a normative future businessman if he were holding a book or other tool of learning. However, a toy sailboat, with its themes of competitiveness and military aggression, was not a tool on which boys were expected to meditate in an interior (domestic) space. As suggested in contemporary print culture, toy sailboats were intended for active outdoor play. Robert’s contemplation of a tool of masculine normalization might suggest his questioning of established norms. In a culture governed by the adherence of rigid dichotomous gender-based categories to which children even of Robert’s age were expected to conform, the slightest intimation of nuance was evidence of queerness.

Sailing against the Norm

Whereas the above portraits of Julie and Robert are queer despite the presence of “gender-appropriate” toys, Julie likely defies gender norms in the many portraits in which she plays with a toy sailboat. This section will focus on *Eugène Manet and His Daughter in the Garden* (1883) (fig. 11) and *Woman and Child in the Garden* (1884) (fig. 12). While dolls receive a significant amount of attention in the available scholarship, a gap exists in terms of most categories of toys, such as toy sailboats. Very little written information exists as to whether toy sailboats were intended for boys, girls, or both. French visual culture of the final quarter of the nineteenth century, on the other hand,

abounds with prints and, to a lesser extent, drawn and painted portraits of children posing with their toy sailboats or sailing them in ponds, fountains, and other natural and artificial sources of water. Using the limited number of available sources, this section will attempt to determine whether Julie's toy sailboat defies gender norms. If it does, this section will proceed to inquire about the implications that playing with a "boys'" toy held for a bourgeois girl during the Third Republic.

Leslie Daiken does not explicitly allude to gender-specificity or lack thereof regarding toy sailboats; however, his anecdotes provide a small amount of promising information. He begins by explaining that, by the twentieth century, toy sailboats had become "an integral part of every child's experience." Interestingly, after using the gender-neutral term "child," Daiken transitions to the masculine when discussing the historical perspective: "...there seems to be remarkably little pictorial record of the kinds of boats which *boys* played with down the ages" [my italics]. Descriptions of specific kinds of toy boats include references that alternate from "children" to "boys" or "lads," but never girls.⁴⁵⁴

Although Daiken's scholarship primarily focuses on the British Isles, it does not refer to the use of toy sailboats among children elsewhere. Therefore, additional sources must be consulted. Interesting gender dynamics unfold in French prints, such as *Les Petits bateaux* (fig. 13)⁴⁵⁵ from an illustrated children's guidebook entitled *Les Jardins de Paris* (1875).⁴⁵⁶ As five children gather near the artificial pond in the Luxembourg Garden, two of them—both boys—proceed to place their boats in the pond, while their

⁴⁵⁴ Daiken, *Children's Toys throughout the Ages*, 94.

⁴⁵⁵ *Les Petits bateaux*, 1875, lithograph, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris.

⁴⁵⁶ *Les Jardins de Paris* (Epinal: Pellerin, 1875).

two female companions on the viewer's left attentively observe the action. The girl on the right, hovering next to one of the boys, directs her attention away from the pond as if she either has been distracted or possesses no interest in the boys' playtime.

This normative active male/passive female binary also appears in two contemporaneous fashion plates—one from *Le Journal des Modes* (January 1880) (fig. 14) and another from *La Mode Illustrée* (1888) (fig. 15). As in *Les Petits bateaux*, the scene takes place in an urban garden with a large artificial pond. The plate from *Le Journal des Modes* depicts two women who appear engaged in a conversation. Meanwhile, a small boy wearing a sailor suit, likely the son of one of the women, stands holding his sailboat in the crook of his arm. His gaze, directed at the women, implies that he is waiting for their conversation to end before he places his boat in the water. While his body language suggests patience and “good” manners, his waiting could also convey his expectation that he have an viewer during his playtime. As in *Les Petits bateaux*, the two models in right-hand corner of the plate from *La Mode Illustrée* divide the roles of active play and passive observation along the lines of gender as the older girl attentively watches the younger boy steady his boat and prevent it from floating adrift by holding a string or cord attached to the vessel.

All of the figures in the prints described above wear fashionable attire that marks them as members of the bourgeoisie. Their locations in public gardens place them under the microscope of the spectacle, requiring conformity to established norms. Just as fashion plates display idealized bourgeois childhood and heteronormative femininity, illustrated urban guidebooks, despite their more informal approach, visually and literally

informed upper-class children what constituted appropriate conduct in public locations.⁴⁵⁷

Although playtime in late nineteenth-century Paris appeared to be gender-integrated, normative codes of decorum approved of toy boats only in the hands of boys. Fashion plates distributed in the United States mostly conveyed the same message. In the plate from the July 1883 issue of *Peterson's Magazine*, the three boys pose with a toy boat and oars, while one girl holds a hoop and skimmer, and the other stands empty-handed. Likewise, a plate from the April 1869 (fig. 16) issue of *Godey's Lady's Book* places three empty-handed girls, the eldest of whom assumes a maternal role to the youngest, between an older boy holding a small rifle and a younger boy holding a sailboat. Nineteenth-century visual culture on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, it seems, promotes toy sailboats as gendered objects.

As outlined in the discussion of Cassatt's portrait of her nephew, French and American cultures drew connections between boats and heteronormative masculinity through the competitiveness of yacht racing and the military prowess of naval forces. While these "masculine" attributes were largely associated with actual, large-scale boats used for transportation, shipping, and military pursuits, but these connections are just as valid with lightweight scale models. Winterhalter's portrait of the Prince of Wales sparked the international popularity of sailor suits, which would last for the remainder of the century. By the 1880s, the sailor suit "became almost a uniform for both sexes [of children] nearly up to adulthood."⁴⁵⁸ As two *Peterson's* plates from July 1886 and April 1889 demonstrate, fashion plates from France and the United States commonly depict

⁴⁵⁷ Thomas, *Impressionist Children*, 133.

⁴⁵⁸ Judith Straeten, "Children's Clothing: 1760-1980," *Philadelphia Museum of Art*, 2016, <http://www.philamuseum.org/exhibitions/1981/668.html>.

children wearing sailor suits. Boys over the age of seven wore the more traditional shirt and tie with knee breeches, while modifications in the forms of dresses and frocks were produced for boys under the age of seven (fig. 17), as well as girls up to the age of sixteen (fig. 18).

If girls (and eventually women) could wear sailor suits without violating established norms, why were they relegated to background roles in playtime that involved toy sailboats? Fashion scholarship does not provide any connection between clothing and toys. The growth of seaside outings and need for clothing that permitted greater freedom of movement appear to have contributed to the introduction of “feminine” versions of the sailor dress,⁴⁵⁹ but scholars do not confirm this overtly. Perhaps the binary structures in place allowed girls to live increasingly active lifestyles but only in specific activities. While codes of conduct might have permitted girls and women to sail passively as passengers, the role of actively operating boats fell to boys and men. The militaristic context of toy boats likely added a layer of prohibition toward female piloting. Whatever the specific reason for this gender segregation, much of the visual culture of the late nineteenth century placed toy sailboats in the domain of boys.

Despite this gender-segregation, at least one fashion plate seems to disrupt this norm. A *Peterson's Magazine* plate displaying June fashions (1870s) (fig. 19) depicts a girl standing on what appears to be a raised creek bank and two boys on the bank opposite her. To emphasize her hairstyle and the rear bow on her dress, she stands with

⁴⁵⁹ Patricia Campbell Warner, *When the Girls Came Out to Play: The Birth of American Sportswear* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006), http://scholarworks.umass.edu/umpress_books/5. Warner refers to the overall comfort of sailor suits and the need for looser-fitting garments at seaside resorts. While this is not a clear reason as to why the sailor suit was modified for girls and eventually women, it is the best connection that I could find in a reliable source.

her back to the audience directing her gaze toward the boy in the sailor suit. Meanwhile, a large toy sailboat floats on the stream equidistantly between the two parties, leaving open the question as to who occupies the active role of pseudo captain. Because the boys stand on the lower bank, with an unobstructed path to the water, we could conclude that the boat belongs to one of them. However, the boat lacks a string or cord that children usually grasp as the vessel floats on the water. Although the boy in the army cadet uniform holds his hands behind his back, no visible lines connect his body to the boat. His companion in the sailor suit possibly directs his gaze at the boat, which could place ownership with him, but, with one hand on his waist and the other on his friend's shoulder, a physical connection to the vessel is absent. Returning to the girl, we see that she extends her left arm at a downward angle, holding her hat in her hand. Her right hand, however, is not visible to the audience. The contour lines on her dress and the outline of the sail could obscure a cord that connects her hidden hand to the boat. This play of forms warrants a second examination of the gaze of the boy in the sailor suit. Is he staring at the boat or something in the girl's right hand? The absence of any telltale line that leads the eye to and disappears behind the girl's arm leaves the question of the ownership of the boat unanswered. More significantly, the print possibly endows the girl with agency—a queer move for a late nineteenth-century engraver tasked with upholding and promoting normative ideals, and an opportunity for an avant-garde artist whose daughter enjoyed playing with boats.

A comparison of the *Peterson's* plate with Morisot's *Eugène Manet and His Daughter in the Garden* and *Woman and Child in a Garden* reveals more in common than merely a girl sailing a toy boat. In both of Morisot's paintings, Julie sits or stands

with her back to the audience, as does the *Peterson's* model. In fact, although Julie is seated in the earlier painting, her hairstyle, the bend of her right arm, and the angle of her face bear similarities to her counterpart in the fashion plate. Julie's pose in the later painting shares the model's positioning of both arms, as well as her stiffly erect posture. Although *Peterson's Magazine* was a Philadelphia publication, its engravers copied plates from French periodicals, sometimes altering the content to suit the cultural differences of its domestic readership.⁴⁶⁰ In other words, considering the obvious influence of contemporary fashion plates in Morisot's oeuvre, it is very likely that she had seen the *Peterson's* plate in its original French context. Any changes the American engravers applied to the figure of the girl could not have exceeded the design of her dress. For a mother who regularly produced visual records of her daughter's daily activities, regardless of their normativity or queerness, the reproduction of the fashion plate model's ambiguous pose was a logical choice.

On the surface, the model's pose is a normative performance of commodified femininity, accentuating the contour lines of her body as well as those on the details of her dress. Simultaneously, if she is defying gender norms precluding girls from playing with boats, her straight, "ladylike" posture conceals her "transgression." Of course, Morisot's paintings are set in the privacy of the family garden of their home in Bougival. Unlike public spaces like the Luxembourg Garden or the Bois de Boulogne, the family garden was an extension of the domestic sphere and thus shielded members of the

⁴⁶⁰ Bohleke, "Americanizing French Fashion Plates," 124-125, 129.

household from the panopticon of the public sphere.⁴⁶¹ In both *Eugène Manet and His Daughter in the Garden* and *Woman and Child in the Garden*, Julie plays amidst a deep green “wall” of vegetation separating the garden from the outside world. Despite the boat’s “inappropriateness” as a girl’s toy, neither Julie’s father nor her nanny Pasie attempt to “correct” her behavior. Manet briefly pauses from his reading or sketching to acknowledge his wife’s presence and include her in the moment of family bonding time that unfolds on the canvas. Pasie, facing away from Julie, focuses on her needlework and allows her charge to play independently. The cool colors and prominent vertical lines in both paintings suggest a calm, stable environment in which the child can freely engage in the pursuits of her choice without repercussion.

As an extension of the domestic sphere, the garden would seem to situate the female child in her “proper” place. However, as Bohleke points out, garden scenes usually depict controlled nature and, by extension, symbolize the controlled sexuality of the women who inhabit it.⁴⁶² Morisot’s two garden scenes in which Julie sails her boat contain flora that is less manicured than typical upper-class gardens. Whether tree branches hang erratically around the child and her father or streaks of green leaves and grass blades sweep horizontally and diagonally around her and her nanny, a degree of “wildness” surrounds Julie as she plays with her toy sailboat. Perhaps these untamed elements of nature act as metaphors for the untamed spirit that still inhabit the child in the final years of her *première enfance*. As late twentieth-century parents accepted their

⁴⁶¹ Thomas, *Impressionist Children*, 75. This is also discussed in greater detail in Chapter One, which focuses on father-child interaction and its relationship to heteronormative masculinity.

⁴⁶² Bohleke, “Americanizing French Fashion Plates,” 123–124.

daughters' tomboyism as long as it was contained to pre-adolescence,⁴⁶³ perhaps Morisot and Manet allowed Julie to contravene gender norms during her early childhood, as well.

Alison Syme draws a link between children and flora in the work of John Singer Sargent, placing the children in the roles of metaphorical “pollinators” as they touch, water, or otherwise engage with real or symbolic plant life. Because they are prepubescent (and therefore sterile), the children serve as substitutes for the unmarried (and unprocreating) artist, and the flora serve as substitutes for the paintings to which Sargent referred as his offspring.⁴⁶⁴ Of course Syme’s exact argument cannot be applied to Morisot’s oeuvre because the artist was a mother and because Julie does not make contact with the plant life that surrounds her. However, her presence in the garden and the uncontrolled plant life that surrounds her could place her in the role of a “child pollinator.” Although, like Sargent’s models, her age places her in a state of temporary sterility, the thriving vegetation against which Julie stands could point to her promise of reproductive futurity. This promise, by extension, could remove the stigma of “transgression” from her choice of toy. Just as her parents could have condoned her “tomboyish” behavior, the metaphor of future fertility could remind the hyper-normative viewer that this momentary act of queerness does not threaten her potential to fulfill her heteronormative “destiny.”

This section has demonstrated the queerness of Morisot’s *Eugène Manet and His Daughter in the Garden* and *Woman and Child in the Garden* in terms of norms

⁴⁶³ Judith Halberstam, “‘Oh Bondage Up Yours!’: Female Masculinity and the Tomboy,” in *Curiouser: On the Queerness of Children*, ed. Steven Bruhm and Natasha Hurley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 193.

⁴⁶⁴ Alison Syme, *A Touch of Blossom: John Singer Sargent and the Queer Flora of Fin-de-Siècle Art* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), 144–193.

established by class and gender, respectively. Julie Manet defies gender norms by playing with a toy sailboat, escaping public ridicule by playing in the private realm of the family garden. Recording her activity on a permanent medium that could fall under public scrutiny, Morisot models her daughter's poses after a fashion plate model that might or might not control the boat in the center of the picture plane.

Conclusion

The child-toy relationships that we see in Morisot's portraits of her daughter and Cassatt's portraits of her nephew and two anonymous children—relationships that come naturally to children—are queer according several factors established by our dominant culture. Psychoanalytic theory sheds light on how mundane activities such as playing with dolls assume a state of strangeness in the face of accepted norms. Children are expected to remain ignorant of sexuality yet are simultaneously pushed toward heteronormative adult teleologies in their playtime activities. As their psyches pass through several stages of development on the road to maturity, their fragile egos are in constant danger from overly oppressive super-egos and other threats capable of inducing neuroses or psychoses.

The portraits in this chapter that Morisot and Cassatt produced of children with “gender-appropriate” toys contain evidence of queerness in this children's behavior. Julie treats her doll with ambivalence, while Robert passively contemplates, rather than actively engages with, his toy sailboat. For many bourgeois families like the Cassatts and the Morisots-Manets, private gardens and country estates allowed children to defy normative play without concerning themselves with the panopticon of the urban

spectacle. Sheltered by the vegetation in the garden at Bougival, Julie could play with her toy boat in the closing years of her *première enfance*, defying the norms established for girls, as depicted in the visual culture of the time.

In sum, the normative paradigm governing bourgeois playtime in France and the United States during the late nineteenth century is a paradox that, after centuries of repetition, was accepted as “natural.” However, as targets of normalization, children felt themselves pulled from their perceptions of what is “normal” and likely acknowledged the confusing, illogical nature of the expectations thrust upon them. In some of instances in this chapter, the queer activities of the children pictured draw our attention and prompt us to ask questions. On the other hand, in depictions of children who do not overtly defy established norms, anomalies in the subject matter raise questions that lead to our realization and acknowledgement of the queering effects of normative teleologies on childhood.

FIGURES FOR CHAPTER FOUR

Figure 1 Berthe Morisot. *Young Girl with a Doll (Julie Manet)*. 1884. Oil on canvas. 82 x 100cm. Private collection.

Figure 2 Berthe Morisot. *Young Girl with a Doll (Julie Manet)*. 1883. Oil on canvas. 73.03 x 70.17cm. Private collection.

Figure 3 Edgar Degas. *Portrait of Henri Michel-Lévy*. 1878. Oil on canvas. 40 x 28cm. Museu Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon.

Figure 4 Anericho Cephas Pierotti. *Young Girl Doll*. 1870. Wax face and limbs, cloth body stuffed with cow hair, glass eyes, human hair. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Figure 5 Depuy et fils [lithographers]. *Le Journal des demoiselles*. December 1884. Women's and girl's fashions. New York Public Library.

Figure 6 *Revue de la Mode: Gazette de la Famille*. 51, plate 114. January 1, 1880. Women's domestic wear and formal wear. Girl's fashion. Los Angeles Public Library.

Figure 7 Mary Cassatt. *Robert and His Sailboat*. 1882-83. Pastel on Paper. 63.98 x 48.9cm. Private Collection.

Figure 8 *Peterson's Magazine*. July 1883. Children's fashions for July. New York Public Library, Mid-Manhattan Collection.

Figure 9 Franz Winterhalter. *Albert Edward, Prince of Wales*. 1846. Oil on canvas, 127.3 x 88.3 cm, Royal Collection, Royal Palaces, Residence and Art Collection.

Figure 10 Pellerin. *Les Jeux d'enfance*, No. 2. 1859. Polychromatic lithograph. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris. (Detail of *Les Petits bateaux* at right.)

Figure 11 Berthe Morisot. *Eugène Manet and His Daughter in the Garden*. 1883. Oil on canvas. 60 x 73cm. Private collection.

Figure 12 Berthe Morisot. *Woman and Child in the Garden*. 1884. Oil on canvas. 59cm x 72cm. National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.

Figure 13 *Les Petits bateaux*. 1875. Lithograph. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris.

Figure 14 *Le Journal des Modes*. January 1880. Women's and boys' fashions. New York Public Library.

Figure 15 *La Mode Illustrée*. 1888. Girls' and boys' fashions. Claremont Colleges Digital Library.

Figure 16 *Godey's Lady's Book*. April 1869. Children's fashions. Accessible Archives.

Figures 17 and 18 *Peterson's Magazine*. (L): April 1889. Girl's and boy's fashions. (R): July 1886. Children's and women's fashions. New York Public Library.

Figure 19 *Peterson's Magazine*. June 1870s. Children's fashions for June. Child's hat. New York Public Library, Mid-Manhattan Collection.

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CURRICULUM VITA

Jessica Cresseveur
Department of Comparative Humanities
University of Louisville
303 Bingham Humanities Bldg.
Louisville, KY 40292 USA
jmcres01@louisville.edu

EDUCATION

Ph.D. 2016: University of Louisville, Division of Humanities

Committee: Jongwoo Jeremy Kim (Chair), Modern European Art History

Benjamin Hufbauer, Modern American Art History

John Greene, French Language and Literature

Michelle Facos (Outside Reader), History of Art/Jewish Studies,
Indiana University, Bloomington

Graduate Certificate 2016: University of Louisville, Dept. of Women's and Gender Studies

M.A. 2003: University College London, Dept. of History of Art

B.A. 2000: University of Louisville, Dept. of Art History

A.A. 1998: Elizabethtown Community College, Dept. of Fine Art

PUBLICATIONS

Published Articles

“‘It was a White and Pretty Hand / Who Made this Blackness for Us:’ The Politics of Gender and Culture in Early Nineteenth-Century French Portraiture,” *re-bus: A Journal of Art History and Theory* 7 (Summer 2015).
<http://www.essex.ac.uk/arhistory/research/rebus.aspx>.

Publications in Progress

- “Mirror, Mirror: Mary Cassatt’s Subversion of Gender Normalization.” [Working title] Title of anthology TBD. Edited by Mary Edwards. [Under review]
- “The Toy Paradox: Cassatt, Morisot, and the Queerness of ‘Heteronormative’ Childhood.” *Interdisciplinary Humanities* 33, no. 2 (Summer 2016). [Under review]
- “Animality and the Problem of Heteronormativity.” *Nineteenth Century Art Worldwide*. [Submitted for consideration]

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

- 2015 Travel award for Southeastern College Art Conference, Graduate Student Council, University of Louisville.
Travel award for Humanities Education and Research Association (HERA) Conference, Graduate Student Council, University of Louisville.
- 2014 Michael Schoenecke Travel Grant, Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association.
Third Prize in Best Research Presentation category, Sixth Annual Graduate Research Symposium, University of Louisville.
Travel award for Humanities Education and Research Association (HERA) Conference, Graduate Student Council, University of Louisville.
- 2013 Travel award for Feminist Art History Conference, Graduate Student Union, University of Louisville.
Certificate of Completion for attending requisite number of PLAN (Professional development, Life skills, Academic development, and Networking) events, School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY.
- 2012 Travel award for Feminist Art History Conference, Graduate Student Council, University of Louisville.

INVITED LECTURES

- “David as Propagandist,” Teacher Training Session for “The Eye of Napoleon” special exhibition, Frazier History Museum (Louisville, KY), October 16, 2013.
- “To Honor and Betray: A Tragedy in Three Acts,” Sights and Sounds series (in conjunction with the Kentucky Opera’s production of *Cavalleria Rusticana/Pagliacci*), Speed Art Museum (Louisville, KY), September 12, 2010.
- “Punishment and Redemption: The ‘Fallen Woman’ in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Art,” Sights and Sounds series (in conjunction with the Kentucky Opera’s production of Verdi’s *La Traviata*), Speed Art Museum (Louisville, KY), September 13, 2009.

- “Alexandre Cabanel’s *Othello Relating His Adventures*,” Sights and Sounds series (in conjunction with the Kentucky Opera’s production of Verdi’s *Otello*), Speed Art Museum (Louisville, KY), September 14, 2008.
- Docent Training lecture on Adélaïde Labille-Guiard’s *Portrait of Madame Adélaïde*, Speed Art Museum (Louisville, KY), November 7, 2005.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- “The Queer Child and Haut Bourgeois Domesticity,” 3-Minute Thesis competition, Graduate Research Conference, University of Louisville (Louisville, KY), April 1, 2016. [Forthcoming]
- “Temporality and Trauma: The Subversion of Normalization in Mary Cassatt’s *Mother and Child (Mother Wearing a Sunflower on Her Dress)*,” Southeastern College Art Conference (SECAC), Wyndham Grand Hotel (Pittsburgh, PA), October 24, 2015.
- “The Toy Paradox: Cassatt, Morisot, and the Queerness of ‘Heteronormative’ Childhood,” Humanities Education and Research Association (HERA) annual conference, Hotel Whitcomb (San Francisco, CA), April 9, 2015.
- “Selling Purity: Desired Delay in *Fin-de-Siècle* Visual Culture,” Midwest Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association annual conference, JW Marriott Indianapolis (Indianapolis, IN), October 5, 2014.
- “Objectified Liberty: The Sexualization of an Allegory in French and American World War I Propaganda,” Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association annual conference, Marriott Chicago (Chicago, IL), April 16, 2014.
- “Subversive Liberty: Nanine Vallain’s Challenge to Patriarchal Allegory” [abridged], Sixth Annual Graduate Research Symposium, University of Louisville, (Louisville, KY), April 5, 2014.
- “Portrait of the Artist as a Monster,” Humanities Education and Research Association (HERA) annual Conference, The Fairfax Hotel at Embassy Row (Washington, DC), March 1, 2014.
- “Subversive Liberty: Nanine Vallain’s Challenge to Patriarchal Allegory,” Feminist Art History Conference, American University (Washington, DC), November 9, 2013.
- “The ‘Madness’ of Constance Mayer: Did Society Share the Blame?” Cultural Studies Association Conference, Columbia College (Chicago, IL), May 25, 2013.
- “Battle of the Sexes: The Frémiet-Paelinck Rivalry,” Feminist Art History Conference, American University (Washington, DC), November 10, 2012.
- “The Politics of Rebirth: Jacques-Louis David’s 1794 Self-Portrait,” Association of Humanities Academics Third Annual Re: Conference (“The Phoenix Effect: Regeneration, Rebirth, Reformation”), University of Louisville (Louisville, KY), March 23, 2012.

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Art History
Women's and Gender Studies
Interdisciplinary Humanities

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Art History/Visual Culture (1789-1960)
Art Appreciation
Women's and Gender Studies
Interdisciplinary Humanities

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Louisville, Louisville, KY (2013-present)

Graduate Teaching Assistant

Creativity and the Arts (Fall 2013, Fall 2014-Spring 2015, Fall 2015-Spring 2016)
Cultures of America (Spring-Summer 2014, Summer 2015)

Jefferson Community and Technical College, Louisville, KY (2004-2013)

Adjunct Instructor

Introduction to Art, Western-only approach (Fall 2004-Summer 2013)
Introduction to Art, Global approach (Fall 2006-Spring 2011)
Ancient through Medieval Art History (Spring 2011-Fall 2011)
Renaissance through Modern Art History (Fall 2007, Fall 2009-Spring 2011)

Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY (Fall 2006)

Docent Instructor

General art history survey from Ancient Egypt to the present

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Delphi U (Online course development training), May 4-8, 2015, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY
Grant Writing Academy, January 8-April 9, 2015, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY

COURSES TAKEN

Humanistic Studies I (Fall 2011)
Humanistic Studies II (Spring 2012)
Creativity and Madness (Fall 2012)
Feminist Theory (Fall 2012)
Interdisciplinary Theory: Arts and Humanities (Spring 2013)
Women and Medicine (Spring 2013)
Reading Knowledge of German (Summer 2013)

History of U.S. Feminisms (Fall 2013)
 Women in the U.S. and Europe in the Twentieth Century (Fall 2013)
 Queer Art and Theory (Fall 2013)
 Modernism (Spring 2014)
 The Global Human (Spring 2014)
 Dandies, Aesthetes, and Decadence (Spring 2014)
 Contemporary Theories of Interpretation (Summer 2014)

SERVICE

Academic Service

May 2015-present: Vice President, Association of Humanities Academics, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY.
 Feb. 27, 2015: Session chair, Animals, Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture since 1900, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY.
 Oct. 16, 2014: Volunteer, Registration table, Translation and the Global Humanities Symposium, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY.
 Oct. 5, 2014: Session chair, Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture panel, Midwest Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association (MPCA/ACA) Conference, JW Marriott, Indianapolis, IN.
 Aug. 2014-present: Peer mentor to first-year Ph.D student, Division of Humanities, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY.
 Apr. 17, 2014: Volunteer, Scholarly Exchange Table, Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association (PCA/ACA) Conference, Marriott Chicago, Chicago, IL.
 Mar. 1, 2014: Session Chair, Monsters and Monstrosities panel, Humanities Education and Research Association (HERA) Conference, Fairfax Hotel at Embassy Row, Washington, DC.
 Feb. 20, 2014: Session Chair, Multimedia Cuts panel, Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture since 1900, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY.
 May 25, 2013: Session Chair, French Cultural Studies panel, Cultural Studies Association Conference, Columbia College, Chicago, IL.
 May 2013-May 2015: Secretary, Association of Humanities Academics, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY.
 Jan. 2013: Selection Committee Member, annual Re: Conference, Association of Humanities Academics, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY.
 Dec. 2012-present: Transcriber, Transcribe Bentham Project, University College London, available at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/transcribe-bentham/>.
 Aug. 2011-Mar. 2013: Organizer, annual Re: Conference, Association of Humanities Academics, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY.
 Aug. 2011-July 2013: Green Team, Jefferson Community and Technical College, Louisville, KY.
 Mar. 2009-Mar. 2012: Participant, annual Women's History Month "Voices of Women" plays, Jefferson Community and Technical College, Louisville, KY.
 June 2005-July 2013: Summer Adviser, Jefferson Community and Technical College,

Louisville, KY.

Aug. 2004-May 2013: Slide Librarian, digital slide collection, Fine Art Department, Jefferson Community and Technical College, Louisville, KY.

Aug. 2004-May 2013: Secretary/Payment subcommittee, Arts Festival Committee, Jefferson Community and Technical College, Louisville, KY.

Apr. 2003: Student Assistant, Association of Art Historians conference, University College London, London, UK.

Jan.-Apr. 2003: History of Art Departmental Librarian, University College London, London, UK.

Museum Service

Jan. 2014: Fact-Checker, "The Emperor and the Artist: An Unlikely Pair," *Frazier History Museum Compass* (Winter 2014), 6.

Nov. 7 and 21, 2013: Members' tours of "The Eye of Napoleon" special exhibition, Frazier History Museum, Louisville, KY.

AFFILIATIONS

Association of Historians of Nineteenth-Century Art, 2016-present

Southeastern College Art Conference, 2015-present

Humanities Education and Research Association, 2014-present

Association of Humanities Academics, 2011-present

College Art Association, 2009-present

Golden Key Honor Society, 1999-present

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, 1997-present

LANGUAGES

German: basic reading. Reading Knowledge of German class, Division of Humanities, University of Louisville. Passed July 2013

French: basic reading. Proficiency exam administered by the Department of English, University of Louisville. Passed July 2012

REFERENCES

Jongwoo Jeremy Kim, Associate Professor of Art History, Chair, Graduate Studies, Department of Fine Art, University of Louisville, 502-852-0444, jongwoo.kim@louisville.edu

Benjamin Hufbauer, Associate Professor of Art History, Department of Fine Art, University of Louisville, 502-852-0442, hufbauer@louisville.edu

John Greene, Professor of French, Department of Classical and Modern Languages, University of Louisville, 502-852-0496, jpgree01@louisville.edu