

middle distance; and finally an empty cityscape showing Glass Town as an assemblage of monuments that declare themselves to be artifices, including a colonnade facade, a pyramid, and a tower with an exterior spiral staircase resembling the Mosque at Samarra. Maybe the problem of presenting the bright intensity of the Brontës' imagined world is insurmountable. In any case, it is a high success that *Glass Town* depicts the processes of the imagination so clearly, allowing the contemporary readers to dream the dream onward.

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In the Flush of Youth: Offerings from the Juvenilia Press

Norna or, the Witch's Curse. Louisa May Alcott. Eds. Nicole Lafrenire, Michael Londry, Catriona Martyn, and Erika Rothwell. Juvenilia P, 1994. 73 pp. \$7 paper. ISBN 0-9698271-3. *A Quiet Game and Other Early Works.* Margaret Atwood. Eds. Kathy Chung and Sherrill Grace. Juvenilia P, 1997. 23 pp. paper. ISBN 0-9698271-8-0. *My Angria and the Angrians.* Charlotte Brontë. Eds. Juliet McMaster and Leslie Robertson. Juvenilia P, 1997. 83 pp. paper. ISBN 0-9681961-0-1. *Edward Neville.* Marianne Evans (George Eliot). Ed. Juliet McMaster and others. Juvenilia P, 1995. 30 pp. \$7 paper. ISBN 0-9698271-4-8. *Embryo Words: Margaret Laurence's Early Writings.* Margaret Laurence. Ed. Nora Foster Stovel. Juvenilia P, 1997. 65 pp. paper. ISBN 0-9681961-1-X. *Indamora to Lindamira.* Lady Mary Pierrepont (later Wortley Montagu). Ed. Isobel Grundy. Juvenilia P, 1994. 37 pp. \$7 paper. ISBN 0-9298271-0-5. *Pockets Full of Stars.* Alison White. Ed. Arlette Zinck. Juvenilia P, 1994. 59 pp. \$5 paper. ISBN 0-9698271-2-1.

Most of us look at our juvenile writing with a jaded eye. Did we really write that? (Somewhere in a box lies my imitation Nancy Drew mystery, "Irene Belle and the Case of the Dognappers.") However, as the Juvenilia Press has proven, the juvenile efforts of famous writers are a type of literature that deserves more attention. This review covers recently published juvenilia written by Lady Mary Pierrepont (later Wortley Montagu), Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, Louisa May Alcott, Alison White, Margaret Laurence and Margaret Atwood. In these selections we can see the under-25 writer learning how to write, and having fun at the same time. For the English teacher in high school and university, juvenilia offer an exciting way of teaching literary traditions, and of introducing students to canonical writers in a way that is noncanonical.

The Juvenilia Press began as a project in Dr. Juliet McMaster's Austen course at the University of Alberta. By having students edit, annotate, illus-

trate and write the introductions for Austen's "Jack and Alice," McMaster taught them basic principles of primary research. The result was a publishable edition of Austen's story and, before long, this kind of class project became a permanent affair with the founding of the Juvenilia Press. There are currently 16 titles available, and academics as far-flung as those in Australia are involved. The Juvenilia Press is committed to publishing the early works of writers "without being too solemn about it" (McMaster, "Apprentice" 9). This easy-going attitude matches the works themselves; indeed, the very term "juvenile" is linked in Latin with the word for delight. Certainly these writers revel in the excesses that they later tamed, and their work is, therefore, joyful and zesty. Brontë's imaginary country, Angria, "will have nothing trite. There must be flash and bustle and rising sunism about all her affairs ..." (49). Alcott glories in the gothic: "That heart is filled with dark and evil passions, and that hand is stained with blood" (24). The exceptions are Atwood, whose tone is as bitter and ironic as it is decades later, and Laurence, whose adolescence was marked by World War II. One of Laurence's poems ends with the phrase: "For my heart is sick of the heartsick world" (4).

The juvenilia show how the writers tried to model themselves after their favourite writers and literary traditions. They were enviably well read: at age fifteen Alcott was influenced by Shakespeare, Marlowe, gothic and sentimental novels. Yet we can detect the beginnings of the writers' individual voices and the occasional innovation, such as Alison White's six-line mythpoems. As well, we can see images and themes that the writers later developed with greater sophistication. Brontë's Zamorna resembles Mr. Rochester with "something superb, impetuous, resistless ..." (22). Likewise, Laurence's stories — such as "Tal des Walde," about an Austrian aristocrat who tries to establish a feudal estate in Manitoba — reveal her interest in the cultures that make up Western Canada. Juvenilia thus serve to illustrate a writer's development.

The texts are, on the whole, well-chosen. Alcott's *Norna* is the basis for the play *The Witch's Curse* in *Little Women*, and reading the first helps you understand the second. Atwood's poetry and prose already show her characteristic economy of style: "A Quiet Game" is a spare, intense piece about a boy and his cold mother. However, Brontë created such a complex world with her brother Branwell that the selection here is a little confusing when taken out of context with the other Angrian stories. The Eliot fragment is also less successful than the other Juvenilia Press books because it cannot satisfy the reader as fully as a completed story can.

The thorough editing of these texts makes some of the more confusing historical events (Eliot's civil war) and literary traditions (Pierrepont's epistolary style) accessible to the general reader and to the high-school student. It is remarkable how many notes some of these works can generate to achieve this accessibility: Eliot's eight-page fragment has 59 notes attached. I should observe, however, that the stories can be understood and enjoyed without the notes. Likewise, the casual reader can skip the detailed introductions, whereas the student will profit from them.

The illustrations are all simple black-and-white ink drawings, which lessen the weight of scholarly presence. Sometimes they veer on caricature, but they pick up on the playful aspect that most of these texts share. They also make these texts accessible to even the very young reader; children would enjoy some of these works, such as White's *Pockets Full of Stars*.

Indeed, juvenilia primarily belong to the young. I like the way the Juvenilia Press is committed to developing each project from the classroom, and I see no reason why such projects could not be guided by high-school teachers. They could, as Juliet McMaster suggests, bridge the "generation gap" between the writer/teacher and the reader, and break down the resistance young readers often have towards Literature with a capital L, for they can more easily identify with a teenage George Eliot than the mature creator of *Daniel Deronda* ("Teaching" 136).

High school students would enjoy studying *Norna* — and presenting it. Whether for high school and university students, or armchair readers, these works are accessible examples of literary tradition. Reading *Norna*, for example, is a good introduction to the gothic conventions of the baggy monsters of Ann Radcliffe. With a little imagination, these works could fit into both children's and "adult's" literature courses. They could go far in dispelling condescending attitudes towards the young and their writing.

The chief reason to read and teach juvenilia, however, is that they are often very good. Best of all, these "embryo words" can give young writers hope that their own juvenilia will survive and that, one day, they could be the next Atwood.

Works Cited

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From the Young Writer to the Young Reader: Jane Austen's Juvenilia

Jack and Alice. Jane Austen. Ed., annot., illus. by members of English 455 and 690 at the University of Alberta under the general editorship of Juliet McMaster. Juvenilia Press, 1992. Repr. 1994. 42 pp. \$4.00 paper. No ISBN #. *Amelia Webster and The Three Sisters*. Jane Austen. Ed., annot., illus. by members of