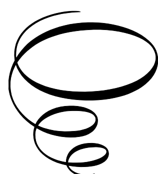
The Spatial Dynamics of Juvenile Series Literature

The Spatial Dynamics of Juvenile Series Literature

Edited by

Michael G. Cornelius

Cambridge Scholars Publishing



The Spatial Dynamics of Juvenile Series Literature

Edited by Michael G. Cornelius

This book first published 2021

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2021 by Michael G. Cornelius and contributors

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-5275-6078-3
ISBN (13): 978-1-5275-6078-9

for Joe, and for everyone who likes their literary heroes constant and unchanging

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements ix

Introduction 1
The Spatial Dynamics of Juvenile Series Literature
Michael G. Cornelius

Chapter 1 17
Jungle Heterotopia: The Production of Space in Kipling's Mowgli Series
James Nightingale

Chapter 2 39
Becoming an American Woman: Home and Displacement
in the *What Katy Did* Series
Juliet Conway

Chapter 3 57
Changing Spaces: Ruth Fielding, Collaboration, and the Creation of Mise
En Scène
Emily Hamilton-Honey

Chapter 4 77
An Inaugural Mystery "Mystery": Narrative Space, Identity,
and Reception in the Hardy Boys Series
Larry T. Shillock

Chapter 5 97
Nancy Drew in Appalachia: Regionalism and Primitivism
Michael G. Cornelius

Chapter 6 115
"This is Macdonald Hall": Bruno and Boots and the Queer Potential
of the Boys' School Story
Jeremy Ryan Fairall

Chapter 7 131
Political Economics and Territory/Territoriality in the Warriors Series
Katelynn Gilbert

Chapter 8 149
"Killing is for grown-ups": The Spatial Performance of Trauma
in Anthony Horowitz's Alex Rider Series
Janna Harner

Chapter 9 171
Falling Off and Into Maps: Exploring Spatial Dynamics in Roopa Pai's
Taranauts Series
Susan Lobo

Contributor Biographies 189

Index 193

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to extend my gratitude to the book’s contributors, who inspired me with their work. And to everyone who had a hand in helping this work come to fruition, I express my sincere thanks.

INTRODUCTION

THE SPATIAL DYNAMICS OF JUVENILE SERIES LITERATURE

MICHAEL G. CORNELIUS

By the time twelve-year-old me came across the Vicki Barr, Flight Stewardess series, I had voraciously devoured hundreds of other juvenile detective series books I had discovered through my school, town, and county libraries. Nancy Drew, the Hardy Boys, The Three Investigators, the Dana Girls, Trixie Belden, Rick Brant, Tom Swift, Cherry Ames—all of these series had only begun yielding their secrets to me, and yet I felt as if we were all fast friends, and, indeed, those series—and several others—became mainstays of my childhood, and the characters embedded within those narratives (as, indeed, the books themselves) developed into an important presence in my life. I spent many a lonely night well through my teens reading three or four Nancy Drew books in one sitting, lying stomach-down on my bed, a hand-crafted pillow acting as a place to prop my book, re-reading the same titles over and over again—*The Secret of the Forgotten City*; *The Spider Sapphire Mystery*; *The Hidden Window Mystery*. One night I remember reading *The Hidden Window Mystery* twice in a row, as if, upon re-reading it, the mystery's denouement would in some way change or, somehow, magically, the book would present differently to me, as if the text printed on the pages itself would reveal new mysteries and new surprises I had never noticed before.

Actually, though, one thing I loved about these books is that they never surprised me, that they never changed. Nancy Drew never aged, or grew, or altered in any significant way. The problems she overcame were societal, not social; they were the woes of other people, hapless victims of crime, and not the very real self-angst of childhood traumas, mild or otherwise. Nancy herself was always just Nancy. In the same manner, Frank and Joe were always the boy detectives from Bayport; Jean and Louise Dana were always students at the Starhurst School for Girls; and Jupiter Jones never lost any weight—even if his friends indelicately

suggested he should. Heck, try as she might, Trixie Belden never really got any better at math, though at least when she applied herself she could earn reasonably respectable grades in the subject. These essential components of my world remained ever steadfast and constant, and in their constancy I discovered tremendous comfort and respite. Whether I had read the same Nancy Drew book one hundred times or whether I was reading it for the first time, I already knew how it ended, already knew what would happen in the plot to get me to that ending, and already knew that knowing such stability existed in this world—in *my* world—was a continuous source of reassurance indeed.

So when I picked up my first Vicki Barr book—specifically, the fifth volume in the series, *The Clue of the Broken Blossom*—I thought I knew what to expect. And, in almost every way, my expectations held true. Vicki was confronted with a mystery and solved it. She helped people she barely knew. She did so free from adult supervision, free from self-doubt and self-consciousness and self-problems. She was, herself, robustly herself, the same as all other girl and boy sleuths I had read to that point, projecting her generally flat, idealized characterization as a reflection of a societal ideal that worked to correct and maintain societal ills. Everything was the same as every other juvenile detective series I had so far read—except for one little detail. *The Clue of the Broken Blossom* was published in 1950 and is set in pre-statehood Hawaii, and the book opens as Vicki is planning to depart the snowy climes of New York for Honolulu. After flying for twenty-four hours, she is met at the airport by her friends Bob and Helen Kane. That same evening, Vicki and her married companions meet up with a young doctor named Hank Hoyt, and the foursome head off for an evening of dancing, starting first at the Ala Moana hotel before heading to the Outrigger Club, the Blue Lei, the South Seas, and finally Lau Yee Chai's. This last stop did not conclude the evening, however; after a long night of dancing, the group fueled up with "foot-long frankfurters at a drive-in called the Kau Kau Korner" (Tatham 42).

Girl and boy detectives are remarkably social beings; these figures lead rich social existences, usually as the respective heads of their social groupings. This may seem surprising, since the act of detection itself is generally a solitary undertaking. The preeminent American author Bobbie Ann Mason writes that, despite the virtual omnipresence of Nancy's chums Bess and George and her boyfriend Ned Nickerson, "Nancy sleuths virtually unaided" (56). Deborah O'Keefe, writing about the role of peer groups in the Nancy Drew series, likewise observes, "Nancy was unlike heroines who defined themselves through their group of friends and accepted the group's conventions" (115). The same is true

of all girl and boy sleuthing figures; while detective duos like the Hardy Boys and the Dana Girls work in tandem with their eponymous detecting partners, the effort of the juvenile detective to solve crimes, right wrongs, restore society, and in general save the day is solitary work, shared only amongst those who achieve the same status as detective and whose constructive identities are constituted primarily as sleuth, with whatever additional identificatory markers (friend, daughter/son, girlfriend/boyfriend, student, nurse, scientist, spy, flight attendant) adjoined only to flesh out the characterization of the juvenile detective her/himself. Nancy Drew is a friend, a daughter, and a girlfriend, but these aspects of her being are incidental to her quiddity and her development; she is a detective, truly, and little more.

Still, she is a highly social creature. Nancy Drew frequents dances, fraternity parties, and the other events of collegiate social life at Emerson University, the institution where her boyfriend Ned Nickerson studies, and is likewise prominent in the society of River Heights, her fictional hometown. Other girl and boy sleuths have attended and hosted every manner of social event, from picnics to football games to candy pulls to winter carnivals to beach parties to wiener roasts. These moments are usually incidental in the narratives of these texts, moments that reassure us of both the social status and social normativity of these characters but that generally pass without seeming too remarkable, unless by happenstance a clue to the current mystery arises out of such circumstances. And, indeed, in *The Clue of the Broken Blossom*, Vicki's evening of dancing and visit to five different nightclubs is utterly insignificant; it comprises one paragraph out of the entire book, and since the mystery itself has yet to show its presence, the entire affair passes without incident at all.

And yet I found myself fascinated by it. Vicki's evening of festive excess sparked something in my imagination, and I found myself picturing these events in my mind long after I had finished the book, long after I began seeking out the other volumes in the series. Why? I was a twelve-year-old boy living in a 1980's rural upstate New York town. I had neither aspirations of nor pretensions toward such an extensive nightlife as Vicki was experiencing here. Why was I transfixed by such an innocuous moment in a book that, by all outward appearances, was no different than the hundreds of other juvenile series books I had already consumed?

The Lives of Children in Space

The spatial lives of children are ferociously delimited.

The two environments that dominate their existences—home and school—may be constructed specifically with children in mind, but their conception is designed to achieve particular aims, predominantly in regard to transitioning children into progressive stages of development and maturation. As Ogaga Okuyade writes, "A home is supposed to represent shelter, warmth, protection, and security" (377). This representation is predicated on particular societal expectations placed upon the concept of home itself: "To label a space 'home' in and of itself territorializes that space depending on cultural and social norms" (Wise 178). These social norms do more than just underline the expected behavioral function of the residents of any given homespace. They actually dictate the form(s) society takes itself. As Aaron Betsky notes, essential domestic spaces expose

> the home not just as the building block of a society and a city, but as a place where the body remains hidden and identity is subsumed into social relations. You are a brother, sister, or parent, and you must appear as a productive part of a family unit within an assigned space that exists at a remove from any real production. In this middle ground, the body and the self both disappear. (180)

In essence, Betsky is arguing that the home is more than the cornerstone upon which societies are founded and formed; homes force their inhabitants to subsume individuality and unique identity formation in order to focus more on the functioning and operation of the spatial unit itself. In other words, in a home, "mother" and "father" are roles that certain individuals within this space are expected to fulfill, and these roles carry with them a weight of societal expectations that the society itself uses as foundational to the structure of the social order. The primary function of any organization—whether social, civic, commercial, ecclesiastic, scholastic—is the functioning of said organization. As such, the use by society of the home unit as the essential, definitory building block for society places unique and tremendous pressure on the inhabitants of the home. Their failure to function within their prescribed roles results not just in the breakdown of the homespace, but in the breakdown of society itself.

Adult roles in such circumstances are already highly constrained; for children—whose comprehension of the social dynamics at play in their functioning as "ideal" children is by both circumstance and necessity more

limited—their ability to "go along" with the social order is obviously restricted by their ability to both comprehend and care about the dynamics of said social order. As such, restrictions are placed on children in order to ensure their participation in social functioning, as Denis Wood and Robert J. Black note:

> One's culture may be constructed, not inherited, but given the culture, the rooms we live are granted too, these rooms which for children first and last are fields of rules, fields of rules established by the things whose nature (as we say, but really whose culture) is renounced by the voices whose timbre is most clearly caught…in the rules. (175)

"Constructed" lives require the proper tools to maintain them; for the members of a household, rules are the adhesive that formulates the bonds that cohere them, one to the other, while also delineating the roles each member of the family is expected (by society) to play.

School settings are likewise dominated by "constructed" roles and societal expectations. As Stuart C. Aitken points out, "A major purpose of school control is to socialize children with regard to their roles in life and their places in society" (90). Children are required to learn in order to contribute to the economic welfare of the nation-state. Social development in school focuses on functional group dynamics and the dyadic construction of future romantic relationships, since society believes that marriage is another cornerstone of the family unit. In an earlier work that focused on girls' school series books, I argue that these texts construct the lives of students as "practice for [their] futures" as parents, spouses, and economically-contributing members of society (in the case of women, usually in that order) (102). This reflects the French scholar Michel de Certeau's conceptualization of space:

> Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function as a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities… In short, *space is a practiced place*. Thus the street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into space by walkers. (117, italics original)

Here, de Certeau focuses on the utilization of a space as a means of definition; how an environment is used indicates how it is perceived as well. Yet the concept of "practiced place" is just as significant for the "practice" component of the model; school settings are social structures that emphasize practice for an adult life in an adult world. In this instance,

space is transformative of the individual, shaping children into adults, whether they want to alter or not. Such transformations are enhanced within the setting by the rules and restrictions that govern the space. School settings are thus dominated by restrictions—both written and understood—that are designed to enforce the social coding that is essential to the fabrication of the school setting in the first place, in order to effect the most successful possible progression of children into adults.

Thus children's lives are ruled by rules, and these rules can be spatially demarcated. The manner in which children are both expected and allowed to act is often outlined by where they are. Children are enjoined to maintain "indoor" voices; to act differently in public than in the home; and even to order their behavior depending upon the public sphere, whether it be school, or church, a store, or a park. Indeed, children's social roles in public are often more complex than those of adults, in part because their behavior is perceived as reflective of the supervising adults' ability to order the lives and beings of the children in their charge. As such, children are responsible not only for their own social roles but also that of their parents and guardians; and yet, children often fail to comprehend the complexities of varying social spaces or the directives under which they are intended to act, and, as a result, often come up in short in their behavior, which can result in some form of chastisement or punishment emanating from transgressions that they may or may not fully comprehend.

Of course, many rules are designed to prevent children from harming themselves or others, and all people must live under varying forms of rules and by varying social roles that can change depending upon the space one is currently inhabiting. Yet the difference is that adults generally *understand* the nature of the social roles they are performing, even if it chafes them; children, who may comprehend that a certain act they commit is against the rules their parents or guardians have lain out for them, often fail to comprehend *why* this is so, especially because the *why* can frequently best be responded to in a manner along the lines of "Because I said so," which is adult-code for "Because society compels me to believe so," neither of which is a persuasive argument for children to alter their behavior.

This is a significant part of the reason why children's literature has its roots in morality works like fables and fairy tales, which offer stories with moral lessons imbued with punitive implications. This is why the origins of children's literature can be found in didacticism, since the social benefits of instructing children were seen to be paramount for any literary works composed directly for them. And this is why contemporary

children's literature usually contains an element that is either reflectively educational or reflexively prescriptive. Part of this is the nature of children themselves as beings continually learning about the environments around them (there is a reason children are often told that "school" is their "job"); part of this are the protagonists of children's literature, who to a degree still reflect their didactic roots as (usually moral) exemplars; and part of this is the investment of society in its own functioning and the role of children in sustaining and perpetuating the "constructed" cultures that form society.

Children's literature, especially books in an ordered series, often reflect this callback to didacticism and the direction of children toward progressive maturation spatially. As Laura Ingalls moves from the big woods, to the prairie, to Plum Creek and Silver Lake and beyond, her progressive maturation toward adulthood—and the behavioral adaptations that must accompany such a change—can be tracked by readers. Indeed, such social adaptation becomes almost too much for Laura who, in the seventh book in the series, *Little Town on the Prairie* (a title with a double spatial component), briefly rebels against the inevitable tide of maturity:

> Suddenly she could not bear it all. She thrust back her chair, slammed her book shut and thumped it down on the table. Pa and Ma started, and looked at her in surprise.
>
> "I don't care!" she cried out. "I don't want to study! I don't want to learn! I don't want to teach school, *ever*!"
>
> […]
>
> "What is the matter, Laura?" Pa asked. "Why don't you want to learn, and to teach school?"
>
> "Oh, I don't know!" Laura said in despair. "I am so tired of everything. I want—I want something to happen. I want to go West. I guess I want just to play, and I know I am too old," she almost sobbed, a thing she never did. (211-212)

Laura understands early on that the constraints of adulthood may be different (and altogether less enticing) than the constraints of childhood. In her frustration, she first espouses a spatial change ("I want to go West") and then a temporal change ("I want just to play, and I know I am too old") to address the void that is growing within her ("I want something to happen"). It is evident to Laura that the benefits society ascribes to adulthood—freedom, freedom to choose, freedom from the rules of adults, freedom from supervision—are illusions. Society chooses; adults have rules; and those who are not supervised do the supervising. Laura plainly understands that the inversion of her social order will not improve her situation, nor will it satisfy whatever it is that is gnawing at her soul. Still,

it is too late for laments; dutifully, she does as she is told, and soon such outbursts are relegated to her childish past, as society dictates for us all.

Numerous other children's characters can be spatially tracked through their maturations. Anne Shirley, the protagonist of L. M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables*, develops as she moves from the Green Gables farmhouse to Avonlea, to the island, to Windy Poplars, to her house of dreams, and finally to Ingleside. Spatial dimensions of social maturation need not be depicted so exactingly. When Harry Potter leaves Little Whinging and the cupboard-under-the-stairs in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, he moves on to Hogwarts, which he quickly comes to perceive as his true home. Yet while there Harry must confront ever-increasing dangers; as he chronologically ages, the import of his actions shape the broader landscape around him. By the end of the series, at the age of seventeen, Harry is expected to save all of society, since he has been told that, according to prophecy, only he can defeat the evil wizard Voldemort and restore a utopian vision and functioning to a society that—long before Harry even knew he was a wizard—was already crumbling into social disarray and moral decay.

Generally, then, the more children move through space—whether from home to elementary school to high school to college, or from the little house to Plum Creek to Silver Lake and beyond—the further they move from childhood itself. Instead of focusing on whatever whims might capture a child's heart, they are instead directed toward becoming socioeconomically productive members of society practicing dyadism in preparation for the reproductive act itself, thus perpetuating the cycle all over again, ensuring the survival of the constructed culture that created them in the first place. Indeed, in children's literature, as the protagonists age, they often age out of their own literary stories. Both the Little House series and Anne books eventually feature the children of the initial protagonists as the narrative cynosure of their continuing stories, and in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, Harry's son is the "hero," while Harry himself is sidelined into a more minor role.

It may be argued that time, inevitably, takes us all out of childhood, and these books in a series merely reflect the universal experience frequently known as "growing up." And yet, more than ninety years after she solved *The Secret of the Old Clock*, Nancy Drew is still solving mysteries. She has no "real" job; no plans to go to college;[1] no ambitions for anything more than the eternal summerland in which she finds herself. What is more, there is no societal pressure on her to age out of a system that—to be perfectly fair about this—serves society incredibly well. If the protagonists of juvenile series literature—as opposed to their

counterparts whose stories are told in progressive series form—generally do not age, or grow, or change, then what about their movement through space? How do the places they inhabit impact these characters? Perhaps, more precisely, one might pose the inverse question: how do inalterable, immutable children's characters impact the spaces around them? As they move through this world, thoroughly unaffected by society's pressure on them to grow up, go to college, get a job, get married, and have children, how do these characters alter the spatial landscapes that normally impel children to grow and change and mature?

The Clue in the Kau Kau Korner

As someone perhaps overly familiar with the worlds of the series books I read,[2] I also became familiar with the homespaces of my literary heroes/friends. Nancy Drew's River Heights, the Hardy Boys' hometown of Bayport, Jean and Louise's Starhurst School, The Three Investigators' junk-covered Headquarters, Trixie Belden's beloved Crabapple Farm—these places were the cynosures of the juvenile detecting world. These spaces certainly proved ideal for young detecting sorts; River Heights, for example, supplied Nancy Drew with no end of criminal mischief to uncover, lost inheritances to restore, and fabulous *objets d'art* to find. Margery Fisher, writing on the near-perfection of both River Heights and Bayport for its sleuthing citizens, observes, "In book after book the small towns of Bayport and River Heights retain their familiar contours, within which are concealed an astonishing number of over-Gothicized mansions and battered shacks ready to shelter sinister newcomers" (282). Granted, River Heights did not become River Heights by accident; indeed, it is a great example of de Certeau's "practiced place." The more mysteries Nancy solved, the greater her reputation; the greater her reputation, the more likely clients would seek out Nancy to solve their problems. Nancy's detecting fashions River Heights into a hotbed of criminal activity that requires the detective's gaze, because without her acts of detection, people would not otherwise imagine a teenaged sleuth could solve their problems, restore order, and in general save the day.

I knew River Heights; knew it well. I knew it was located on the banks of the Muskoka River; I knew that Mr. Faber owned an antique shop downtown, near Burk's Department Store; and I knew to avoid Dockville, the "slum district" of River Heights (Keene *Lilac Inn* 92). And though I knew River Heights intimately, I never felt any connection to it. It remained, as Marc Augé might label it, a "non-place" (n.p.). Bruno Bosteels argues that non-place is a "space completely emptied out of eventfulness" (136).

It may seem odd to suggest that a place as criminally active as River Heights as lacking "eventfulness," but the perfected auspices of the town left it somehow remote; if, in picking up a Nancy Drew book, one was always certain Nancy would find a mystery no matter where she went, then what did space or geography matter? River Heights was merely a backdrop to Nancy's own relentless pursuit of truth and social order, and if all of a sudden Nancy needed a shop owner who was somewhat expert in Russian Grand Imperial antiquities in order to solve her mystery (as she does in *The Clue in the Jewel Box*), then *voila*!—the town would happily produce one for her.

Nancy Drew traveled, of course; she went to Arizona, Florida, Mexico, Scotland, Hong Kong, Turkey, Japan. The other sleuths in my favorite series books traveled as well, some crisscrossing the globe, others more modestly traveling just to the next state over. And in their travels, while they took time to see the sites, they always found mysteries, and the topographies afore them—like their resplendent hometowns—provided whatever was necessary for the sleuths to enforce their primary identity structures and uncover the truth about some crime or another. And thus I read, and read, and read, and I traveled the globe without ever leaving the modest comforts of my twin bed, but I never really went anywhere, not in my mind, nor my heart, nor my soul. Not until I read Vicki Barr. Not until *The Clue of the Broken Blossom*.

While twelve-year-old me would have certainly been in slight awe of what I would have perceived to be a sophisticated and rather "adult" night on the town, the actual events of the evening held little interest for me. What was perhaps more significant was my sudden belief—borne out of nothing but instinct—that all of the places listed in the passage were *real*, that there really was a Kau Kau Korner located at the intersection of Kapiolani and Kalakaua boulevards in Honolulu, and that if I went there, I, too, could enjoy a foot-long frankfurter with mustard, ketchup, and relish.[3] I knew it was real, and that sense of reality—that sense of the intrusion of the real world into my juvenile series life—had never happened to me before. This may, perhaps, seem somewhat absurd. When Nancy Drew or Frank and Joe Hardy traveled the world they frequently went to real places. For example, when Nancy Drew visited Scotland in *The Clue of the Whistling Bagpipes*, she visited Stirling Castle, Fort William, Ben Nevis, and Loch Lomond. Yet at Ben Nevis Nancy encounters thieves; in Fort William, car trouble. These are not dots on a map or world travel sites; these are not tourist destinations or places to see historical monuments. In the world of Nancy Drew, these sites were just

extensions of River Heights, more places for Nancy to solve mysteries. They existed in service of a girl sleuth; nothing more.

Yet that was not quite the case for Vicki Barr. The early volumes of the Vicki Barr series had a tendency to delay the mystery (in the first volume, *Silver Wings for Vicki*, the "mystery" only presents itself at the very end; instead, most of the book details Vicki's training to become a flight stewardess). When Vicki visited the Kau Kau Korner, she was not there to have a run-in with the book's criminal element or pick up a clue to the mysterious goings-on in the plot; she was simply there to have a hot dog after spending a night out dancing with her friends. Since no mystery had yet to present itself, I was not eagerly anticipating the next clue; instead, I was present in the space of the Kau Kau Korner as merely the Kau Kau Korner, and not as the setting where some exciting event was about to occur.

It was only much later, when I read Jean Baudrillard, did I understand the true significance of that moment:

> Disneyland is presented as imaginary in order to make us believe that the rest is real, whereas all of Los Angeles and the America that surrounds it are no longer real, but belong to the hyper-real order and to the order of simulation… The imaginary of Disneyland is neither true nor false; it is a deterrence machine set up in order to rejuvenate the fiction of the real in the opposite camp. (12-13)

In Baudrillard's analogy, the fabricated world of Disneyland is a sort of spatial tautology, a fabrication within a fabrication. River Heights and Bayport and the Starhurst School and all the spatial worlds of series books work the same way, by presenting a fantasy projection for the characters within these series and for childhood as a whole. These spaces may be non-places, but they are some of the most significant non-places that exist. As Augé writes, non-place "never exists in pure form," but instead

> places reconstitute themselves in it; relations are restored and resumed in it… Place and non-place are rather like opposed polarities; the first is never completely erased, the second never totally completed; they are like palimpsests on which the scrambled game of identity and relations is ceaselessly rewritten. (78-79)

As a site of reconstitution, the homespaces and travel (away) spaces within juvenile series books invert Baudrillard's analogy. The "fiction of the real" inherent to Nancy Drew's Scotland does not "rejuvenate" the space; on the

contrary, Nancy Drew's River Heights renders her Scotland *less* real, because, in Nancy Drew-land, Scotland conforms to her, to her spatial needs, and not to the real, not the other way around. This is true of all series book characters. They are not formed by space; rather, they form the space around them, to suit their own needs.

Spatial Dynamics and Series Books

As a unit, children do not generally have an impactful presence on space. The spatial dynamics of childhood lives are formed to reflect the reality that children age and the constructed social value that children must become particular types to be deemed productive members of society. Yet series book characters generally do not age, do not change. They are thus forever children, and often perpetually linked in a very particular and specific moment into their own time. As such they are largely immune to the cultural shaping of the spaces created for them by the adult world. They make space, including real-world spaces, including reader space, and not the other way around.

The essays in this collection all explore that unique juxtaposition, those moments when the immutable child collides with the spatial realities of the world. In almost every case, it is the immutable child who comes out on top; in other instances, though, the juvenile series book protagonist changes—sometimes just a bit—which is often enough for the book's main character to begin adapting to the world around her/him. For instance, in James Nightingale's essay "Jungle Heterotopia: The Production of Space in Kipling's Mowgli Series," the man-child Mowgli demonstrates consistent mastery over a landscape that confounds all others around him. Though Kipling's stories of Mowgli do depict him at different ages, he is actually oldest in the first tale; growing younger as the series develops, Mowgli's spatial proficiency almost seems to increase as he moves chronologically closer to childhood. Juliet Conway's contribution, "Becoming an American Woman: Home and Displacement in the *What Katy Did* series," explores a series that is more "progressive books in a series" and, as such, demonstrates what happens when a nineteenth-century American girl finally commences a delayed spatial journey, one that culminates in her completed transition to complacent adulthood.

It is true that, even in some series books, the characters do ultimately change. Ruth Fielding, the eponymous protagonist in a thirty-volume series, does record shifts in her quiddity as she moves through the spatial markers in her life: to her uncle's home at Red Mill; to the boarding school Briarwood Hall, and then to college; to the battlefield fronts of

World War I; and finally to the vicissitudes of movie-making locales. Ruth is an unusual series book character who does change, but she even more changes the world around her, often acting as a fulcrum for spatial transformation, as Emily Hamilton-Honey's essay "Changing Spaces: Ruth Fielding, Collaboration, and the Creation of Mise En Scène" demonstrates. Larry T. Shillock, meanwhile, examines the intertwining narrative in the first Hardy Boys book, *The Tower Treasure*, as the boy sleuths and their famous detective father, Fenton Hardy, compete over shared space and spatial identities in "An Inaugural Mystery 'Mystery': Narrative Space, Identity, and Reception in the Hardy Boys Series."

My own essay in this collection, "Nancy Drew in Appalachia: Regionalism and Primitivism," explores the authority that series book characters have in shaping space. This is also true in Jeremy Ryan Fairall's contribution, "'This is Macdonald Hall': Bruno and Boots and the Queer Potential of the Boys' School Story," where the main characters in Gordon Korman's beloved boys' series shape the spatial dynamics of the school they attend through both their antics and their dyadic friendship. Katelynn Gilbert's essay, "Political Economics and Territory/Territoriality in the Warriors Series," likewise exhibits the authority of a series book protagonist; though in this case the character is a cat and not a child, the main hero in the Warriors series still dramatically reshapes the broader social environment, after he learns to adapt to it first.

The last two essays act almost as cautionary tales on the role of the immutable child in adult spaces. Janna Harner's essay "'Killing is for grown-ups': The Spatial Performance of Trauma in Anthony Horowitz's Alex Rider Series" explores a darker vision of a child moving into adult space, as the protagonist-hero of this James Bond-like series is psychologically and physically traumatized by the violence adult spaces often contain. Lastly, Susan Lobo's "Falling Off and Into Maps: Exploring Spatial Dynamics in Roopa Pai's Taranauts Series" demonstrates how series book characters are formed. The three main child characters in the series are plucked from their normal lives and turned into superheroes destined to save the realm; yet, in becoming the immutable child, they surrender their former lives and identities, becoming, in the process, components of a nation-state whose own spatial moralities are perhaps not as black-and-white as they may seem.

As Ann R. Tickamyer notes, "the design of space and place… shapes social relations" (806). These social relations, in turn, shape us. Space shapes us, as much (or even more) than we shape it. Unless, of course, one is the immutable child of juvenile series books. Transfixed in a particular time, these characters defy that same transfixion in space, and

rather move about the world quite freely, generally shaping their environment to suit their own purposes. As children, they may act like adults, but it is evident by the reactions of the adult world around them that they are forever barred from the full privileges of adulthood. Good. They are thus also free from the responsibilities and drudgery adulthood brings, free to forever be the individual protagonist-heroes that they have always been. What is perhaps most remarkable about these characters and their relationship to space is not how effortlessly they dominate space, or how easy it seems to be for them to bend space to their will. After all, as the essays in this collection will show, sometimes space in juvenile series books can be a bit more complicated than that. Rather, what is perhaps most fascinating about these characters and the spaces they inhabit is that their relationship to space is neither that of children nor adults; instead, it is something quite different altogether. This is not to ultimately suggest that these characters are neither children nor adults, non-characters to match Augé's non-places. Nor does this indicate that, to alter one's relationship to space (and, by extension, to society), one must exist outside the normal dictates of time and space. No, I think, in the end, these characters show us that to alter our relationships to space, to the spaces that shape and form us, and that we shape and form in turn, we must alter our relationship and commitment to the "constructed" cultures that give rise to us all in the first place. At the end of the day, it is not space that curtails us; rather, it is our own selves who provide our society and our spaces with the means for our own constrainment.

Notes

1. Actually, there is a "Nancy Drew On Campus" series, where Nancy enrolls at Wilder University. The twenty-five volume series was published by Simon and Schuster from 1995-1998 and emphasized the social aspects of college, downplaying any mystery elements in the books and focusing on a wide-ranging cast of characters and the societal ills that come with practicing adulthood. Carolyn Carpan has described the series as "more soap opera romance than mystery" and notes that this new Nancy "often comes across as dumb, missing easy clues she wouldn't have missed in previous series" (135).
2. In the fairness of full disclosure, I own over 1000 series books.
3. These places were/are, in fact, all real; there was a restaurant called the Kau Kau Korner (the name Kau Kau derives from a pidgin word for "food"), a rather well-known all-night diner that billed itself as "The Crossroads of the Pacific." Opened in 1935 by H. P. "Sunny" Sundstrom, the Kau Kau Korner became famous for its food and as a place for local youngsters to be seen. In 1960, Kau Kau Korner was replaced by a café named Coco's, which was itself later replaced (somewhat distressingly) by a Hard Rock Café.

Works Cited

Aitken, Stuart C. *Putting Children in Their Place*. Association of American Geographers, 1994.

Augé, Marc. *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*. Verso, 1992.

Baudrillard, Jean. 1981. *Simulacra and Simulation*. Translated by S. F. Glaser, U of Michigan P, 1994.

Betsky, Aaron. *Queer Space: Architecture and Same-Sex Desire*. William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1997.

Bosteels, Bruno. "Nonplaces: An Anecdoted Topography of Contemporary French Theory." *Diacritics*, vol. 33, no. 3/4, Autumn-Winter 2003, pp. 117-139.

Carpan, Carolyn. *Sisters, Schoolgirls, and Sleuths: Girls' Series Books in America*. The Scarecrow Press, 2009.

Cornelius, Michael G. "Homogeneity, Agency, and the Girls' College Series, 1905-1925." *Representing Agency in Popular Culture: Children and Youth on Page, Screen, and In-Between*, edited by Ingrid E. Castro and Jessica Clark, Lexington Books, 2019, pp. 85-108.

de Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Translated by Steven Rendall, California UP, 1984.

Fisher, Margery. "The Sleuth—Then and Now." *Children's Literature*, vol. 38, no. 4, Fall 1981, pp. 276-284.

Keene, Carolyn. *The Clue in the Jewel Box*. Grosset and Dunlap, 1943.

—. *The Clue of the Whistling Bagpipes*. Grosset and Dunlap, 1964.

—. *The Hidden Window Mystery*. Grosset and Dunlap, 1956.

—. *The Mystery at Lilac Inn*. Grosset and Dunlap, 1930.

—. *The Secret of the Forgotten City*. Grosset and Dunlap, 1975.

—. *The Secret of the Old Clock*. Grosset and Dunlap, 1930.

—. *The Spider Sapphire Mystery*. Grosset and Dunlap, 1968.

Mason, Bobbie Ann. *The Girl Sleuth*. U of Georgia P, 1975.

O'Keefe, Deborah. *Good Girl Messages: How Young Women Were Misled by Their Favorite Books*. Continuum, 2000.

Okuyade, Ogaga. "Traversing Geography, Attaining Cognition: The Utility of Journey in the Postcolonial African Bildungsroman." *Matatu: Journal for African Culture & Society*, vol. 49, 2017, pp. 358-385.

Rowling, J. K. *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. Bloomsbury, 2017.

—. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. Bloomsbury, 1997.

Tatham, Julie. *The Clue of the Broken Blossom*. Grosset and Dunlap, 1950.

Tickamyer, Ann R. “Space Matters! Spatial Inequality in Future Sociology.” *Contemporary Sociology*, vol. 29, no. 6, 2000, pp. 805-813.

Wells, Helen. *Silver Wings for Vicki*. Grosset and Dunlap, 1947.

Wilder, Laura Ingalls. 1941. *Little Town on the Prairie*. HarperTrophy, 1969.

Wise, J. Macgregor. “Home: Territory and Identity.” *The People, Place, and Space Reader*, edited by Jen Jack Gieseking, et al, Routledge, 2014, pp. 176-180.

Wood, Denis and Robert J. Black. “Home Rules.” *The People, Place, and Space Reader*, edited by Jen Jack Gieseking, et al, Routledge, 2014, pp. 173-175.

CHAPTER 1

JUNGLE HETEROTOPIA: THE PRODUCTION OF SPACE IN KIPLING'S MOWGLI SERIES

JAMES W. NIGHTINGALE

Rudyard Kipling's Mowgli is an evergreen character of children's literature, occupying the same iconic pantheon as Alice, Pooh, and Peter Pan. Various movie adaptations of Kipling's stories have appeared in the last one hundred years, with Disney's *The Jungle Book* (1967) being particularly prominent. Even non-readers are familiar with songs like "The Bare Necessities" through cultural osmosis, and the recent photorealistic remake (2016) ensures its place as a touchstone for yet another generation of children. The jungle in which Mowgli's stories are centered is an indelible part of the landscape of children's literature, for better or worse, given its origins in the British Raj. However, rather than dismiss this influential narrative, it is more intriguing to explore Kipling's oeuvre as that of a hybrid, uprooted and divided, and his position not as a mere poet of empire, but a "poet of adolescence," charting the transitional spaces on the journey to adulthood.

The Mowgli tales are collected in two volumes and are sequential stories within themselves. These fit within the form of "books in a series," where we see Mowgli grow up across the installments; he is not a "static child," though he does bear a resemblance to Pan. *The Jungle Book* (published 1894) might not intuitively seem a *series* to readers passingly acquainted with Mowgli, Baloo, and Bagheera, and the existence of *The Second Jungle Book* (published one year later) may come as a surprise, as most readers are familiar with only the first collection of this series. Kipling's adventurous adolescents—Mowgli, and the titular *Kim* and *Stalky & Co.*—all reflect a Victorian mode of writing for juveniles that can broadly be defined as "Boys' Own" stories (taking its name from the nineteenth-century literary magazine of boyhood heroics) and indeed

might be considered early progenitors for series books like Edward Stratemeyer's Tom Swift and the Hardy Boys, certainly in ethos, if not in actual locales and climes.

Two collections may seem scant for a series; however, the case can be made that there are arguably three or even four installments in Kipling's Jungle series. Firstly, there are thematic and spatial intersections with Kipling's *The Just So Stories*, especially with the connective thread of the opening chapter of *The Second Jungle Book* ("How Fear Came") in which Hathi the elephant tells the origin of the Ur-Tiger's stripes being a forerunner of that talking-animal parable world, interstitially placed between the events of the first *Jungle Book*. Additionally, there is Mowgli's appearance as a grown man in the 1893 short story "In The Rukh" in the collection *Many Inventions*, placing the character across many books.

Kipling's Mowgli stories were written backward, imaginatively regressing this anomalous animal-raised adult into the man-cub he must have been and reinserting him into the animalistic world which the Jungle Books retroactively create for him. This adult basis of Mowgli confounds the informal "no growth; no changes" conventions of the other children's classics we put on the same shelf, especially Alice, Pooh, and Pan, in which the protagonist never changes and remains in a perpetual blissfulness of being-ness. Lewis Carroll's Alice, for example, seemingly learns nothing useful in Wonderland for her exploits through the Looking Glass. For A. A. Milne, this iconic role of a stationary figure is represented by Pooh, rather than by Christopher Robin, who poignantly does grow up, while his bear—the true phenomenological protagonist—never changes beyond a signature variance in stoutness. J. M. Barrie's Peter Pan exemplifies this archetype—indeed, the male state of "not-growing-up-ness" is named for the character. Mowgli, on the other hand, defies agelessness, as despite his Edenic upbringing amongst the animals (zoological, rather than the toys and tame tigers of Christopher Robin's childhood days) he *does* grow up, marries, and works in the Indian Forests Department.

Despite his inevitable adulthood, Mowgli is still represented from the inception as a classical Pan, with a preexisting hatred of tigers and his preternatural ability to communicate with the creatures of the jungle. Mowgli's earliest description is as follows, when he startles a Forest Officer who is investigating the site of a fellow officer killed by a tiger. Mowgli steps out of the woods without noise or trace, almost as if called forth from that place by the officers' attempts to follow the tiger's footprints:

> A man was walking down the dried bed of the stream, naked except for the loin-cloth, but crowned with a wreath of the tasselled blossoms of the white convolvulus creeper. So noiselessly did he move over the little pebbles, that even Gisborne, used to the soft-footedness of trackers, started. (*Many Inventions* 160)

Already we can see Mowgli as being defined by the space that surrounds him: he manifests fully formed within the ruhk. He is an archetypical Pan, later seen playing the flute and referred to as "Faunus" (175), a "wandering wood god" (180), and "an angel strayed among the woods" (160). He is enigmatic and seemingly without origin other than within the natural tableaux. Mowgli's identity—straddling the worlds of man and nature, of local and interloper—is instantly fixed by his abrupt annunciation in this location as "a godling strayed out of Greek mythology in a manner rather reminiscent of some of the more whimsical short stories of E. M. Forster" as J. I. M. Stewart so aptly puts it in his discussion of Kipling's work (116). Indeed, there is the wonderful yet dangerous estrangement of "elsewhere" here that typifies Forster's works—of being a foreigner out of place, experiencing a rapturous encounter with a divine, angelic, or threatening youth, on the cusps of liminal spaces of mythology and culture, be they Hindu or the Dionysian.

This dialectic arrangement of space and identity reflects Kipling's self-defining relationship to the real and imagined spaces of India and how his upbringing in mixed worlds shaped Kipling's Mowgli. At the crux of this it must be acknowledged that Kipling's entire canon is a product of Empire. As Jamil Asghar and Muhammad Iqbal Butt observe in their contrapuntal reading of *The Jungle Book*, "The act of reading a colonial text... [presents] an extremely challenging task which dialogically involves multiple socio-historical perspectives and calls on the reader to constantly battle a textual dialectics of power" (144). Edward Said identifies Kipling as partaking of a Western movement that strove to subjugate the cultures of India and the East to its narratives, although the renowned Indian academic Ibn Warraq, in "Rudyard Kipling, India and Edward Said," disagrees. Warraq discusses how the contradictions and challenges found across Kipling display a complex, deep ambivalence with the trappings of the Empire, an underlying remorsefulness, and the inevitable sense of rightness that their rule should fall to the tides of time. In Kipling's poem "Recessional," the author criticizes imperialism and the Empire. Kipling expresses concerns about what he calls in *Something of Myself* "a certain optimism that scared me" regarding Britain's expansive global endeavors: "Far-called, our navies melt away; / On dune and headland sinks the fire: /

Lo, all our pomp of yesterday / Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!" (86, 924). While it would be impossible for any text from Kipling's period to embrace postcolonialism, the images of empires giving way to self-governance do comport with post-colonial ideals. Indeed, rather than lionizing the so-called benefits of the British presence in India, Kipling mercilessly mocks the hypocrisies of the Raj establishment in *Plain Tales from the Hills*, discovering in their out-of-placelessness a source of ridicule and self-othering. This form of satire would be impossible from within strictly endemic Englishness, yet is characteristically Anglo-Indian, hinging upon the points-of-view of the exilic and the expatriated. As Kipling wryly lamented in "The English Flag," "What do they know of England, who only England know?" (188). Englishness is made foreign; the codes of homotopic representation eschewed.

Kipling is, however, ambiguous from either standpoint and always was: G. K. Chesterton reproached him in 1905 for being a rootless world traveler with no real affinity for England (castigating him by reversing and subverting Kipling's well-known maxim, retorting, "What can they know of England, who only know the world?" [qtd. in Alibhai-Brown 31]). Kipling is inherently contradictory. The double-bind of Kipling's love for India and his loyalty to the Empire, and his liminal status as British, yet Indian born, means he is not only criticized now, but was excoriated by his contemporaries, including Chesterton, Forster, and Joseph Conrad, for being neither precisely one thing nor the other. Kipling would even turn down a knighthood and the poet laureateship in order not to be identified as any single nationality, but as Anglo-Indian. As Nedra Reynolds informs us, "geography fixes identities," and in Kipling, an incongruous Englishman, we find a nomadic and oft-reluctant imperialist, existing in the boundaries and margins of Victorian multiculturalism, its imperfect but entwined global cultures (149).

Kipling's quality of contrary self-awareness only accrues if we view his works across time, perhaps reaching its apex in one of his later poems written for children, "We and They." It is difficult to dismiss out of hand a poet who can write a verse that remains so relevant today:

> All good people agree,
> And all good people say,
> All nice people, like Us, are We,
> And everyone else is They:
> But if you cross over the sea,
> Instead of over the way,
> You may end by (think of it) looking on