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## The “New-Formed Leaves” of Juvenilia Press

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April has brought the youngest time of year,  
With clinging cloaks of rain and mist, silver-gray;  
The velvet, star-wreathed night, and wind-clad day;  
And song of meadow larks from uplands near.  
The new-formed leaves unfold to greet the sun,  
Whose light is warming fields still moist with rain,  
While down each city street and grass-fringed lane,  
Children are shouting gladly as they run.

*Margaret Laurence*  
“*Song for Spring, 1944, Canada*”

**T**HE ABOVE OCTAVE FROM MARGARET LAURENCE’S Petrarchan sonnet constructs parallels between the new-born, “youngest” time of year, the “new-formed leaves” of budding trees, and newly freed children bursting out from the confines of a long Canadian winter. Her “Song for Spring, 1944, Canada” is part of the collection *Embryo Words: Margaret Laurence’s Early Writings* (1997) published by Juvenilia Press. This press, founded by Juliet McMaster of the University of Alberta and now under the directorship of Christine Alexander at the University of New South Wales in Australia, publishes literary texts produced by children or teens.

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Lest we dismiss the merit of such youthful writing, we need only recall that Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* started as a piece of juvenilia.<sup>1</sup> The biased critical objection that *Frankenstein* is too good to have been written by a female teenager (and must have actually been written by Percy Shelley) is often leveled at young writers. *Peter Paul Rubens and the Friendly Folk* is a Juvenilia Press title containing text written by Opal Whitely at age six to seven, and its editor Lesley Peterson notes, "The diary was too good, it was argued, to be genuinely the production of a child so young" (vii).<sup>2</sup> Ultimately such incredulousness speaks more about the accuser than the writer. Why have reviewers historically been so closed to the possibility of works of genius coming from a young pen or a female pen or even more astonishingly a young, female pen?

Margaret Laurence's sonnet qualifies as juvenilia because she was only eighteen when it was composed. Her running children convey the sublime freedom and youthful exuberance expressed through many of the offerings printed by Juvenilia Press, and her poetic image of "new-formed leaves" (line 5) connotes the leaves of a freshly printed book or magazine. In his own juvenilia, Lewis Carroll deploys the double meaning of "leaf" to form the visual pun gracing the cover of Juvenilia Press's edition of his *Rectory Magazine* (see figure 1).



Figure 1. A portrait of a Victorian family "reading *The Times* on papyrus, with the leaders on the stalks, the advertisements neatly inserted between the fibres" (Carroll 80).

This image conveys one key aspect of juvenilia: the inclusion of children as cultural interpreters who delight in comedy. Juxtaposed with the blasé adult responses is the small child's readerly delight: "O, Ma! Here's such a funny thing!" The child is the only one smiling and the sole user of exclamation marks. Carroll implies that a caricature may have triggered the child's enthusiasm. Just as Margaret Laurence's children shout "gladly," so Carroll's child exclaims gleefully. There is a joyful zeal in many of the fresh, energetic expressions reproduced by Juvenilia Press.

When considering juvenilia, however, we need also exercise some caution regarding overly idyllic images of youth. The young writer struggles too and can face adult-sized hardships. As editor Nora Stovel reminds Juvenilia Press readers, Laurence constructed her image of childhood verve and delight from the fraught home front of World War II.<sup>3</sup> It is an image of momentary childlike freedom amidst widespread societal loss and grief. There is a darker side to the works published by Juvenilia Press, indicating that young writers are not naively oblivious to problems around them. The producers of juvenilia have valuable, keen perspectives. This sharp reality awareness is present in the young Jane Austen, writing in the turbulent years leading up to and during the French Revolution, the teenage Richard Doyle, satirizing the crowded streets of Victorian London, the nineteen-year-old Mary Grant Bruce, depicting the Australian wilderness with unflinching naturalism, and the pre-teen Iris Vaughan observing events around the Boer War. The young authorial voices represented by Juvenilia Press present honest and gripping responses to personal and societal struggles through texts alive with acute creative clarity.

- 1 The idea for this gothic tale came to her at the age of eighteen, when she first began to construct its narrative arc.
- 2 This accusation of what is essentially fraud has also been directed toward women writers by critics claiming *Wuthering Heights* must have been written by Branwell Brontë, rather than Emily Brontë, or *The Plays on the Passions* written by Matthew Baillie rather than Joanna Baillie, for example.
- 3 In her introduction to *Embryo Words*, Stovel emphasizes how "at age sixteen, on August 19, 1942, the day of Dieppe, Laurence learned the reality of war, when over 3000 Canadians, including a prairie regiment, the Queen's own Cameron Highlanders, were killed" (xiv). Stovel argues that the war strongly influenced Laurence's early writing and interprets the concluding sestet of her youthful Petrarchan sonnet as a prophetic call for "peace, portraying children 'Free ... 'To glance up, unafraid at peaceful skies; for 'Nothing must blot that glory from their eyes'" (xv). Laurence gives her poem historical import and national, geographic particularity by including its year and country of origin in the title, a particularity Stovel slightly occludes by referring to it as "Song for Spring, 1944," a truncation of its full title, as intended by the author: "Song for Spring, 1944, *Canada*" (italics added).

My first introduction to Juvenilia Press came through a dinner at the home of its founder, Juliet McMaster, one December evening in Edmonton, Alberta. Juliet's daughter Lindsey McMaster was my roommate while I was a graduate student at the University of Toronto, and I would visit with the McMasters when home for Christmas. I remember walking into their kitchen in 1996 and seeing Juliet stirring a luscious, aromatic bread pudding while she told me about her work editing *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen* (1997). When Samuel Johnson famously quipped, "My old friend, Mrs Carter, could make a pudding as well as translate Epictetus" (quoted in James Boswell 1: 123), he was referring, of course, to the eighteenth-century bluestocking Elizabeth Carter, but I wonder what he would say about Juliet McMaster. She appears to have illimitable energy.

That evening in 1996, after mentioning a paper I was writing on racial ambiguity in abolitionist discourse and *Jane Eyre*, I left the McMaster home with Juvenilia Press copies of Charlotte Brontë's *A Romantic Tale: The Twelve Adventurers* (1993) and Branwell Brontë's *Blackwood's Magazine* (1995), signed by the giver of these unique Christmas gifts. By comparing these two "new-formed" volumes with each other, one can trace the press's early development. In 1992, the first Juvenilia Press title was published, Jane Austen's *Jack and Alice*, and the volumes by the Brontë siblings followed shortly thereafter. The printing of Charlotte's text reflects the press's modest beginnings: the cover is saddle-stitched yellow cardstock. There are two fonts inside, Helvetica in the introduction and Times New Roman for the rest of the book. The edition arose from the collaborative efforts of McMaster and a team of students. It includes an introduction by Laura Stovel and John Barach, line-art drawings by McMaster, notes by Barach, and a bibliography. Published two years later, *Blackwood's Magazine* exhibits a leap in quality. Its typeset is consistent, and it includes half-toned reproductions. The book is perfect bound, with a proper spine. It is supported by appendix material, including a one-paragraph mission statement of the press as "an enterprise that combines scholarship with pedagogy" (46) and a list of ten titles, the beginnings of a catalogue.

Today, the press has grown from ten titles to nearly fifty. The expanded mission statement, written by new director Christine Alexander, appears on the leaf facing each title page. The statement now begins more adamantly: "The Juvenilia Press promotes the study of literary juvenilia, a category of literature that has been largely neglected." Gone is the initial opening emphasis on pedagogy, although there is still a later reference to the "pedagogic aim" of each editor as "an expert in the field" working with students. The tone is more formal and theoretical. Since the press

moved to the University of New South Wales in 2001, the books often include photographs of the young authors and artwork created by them or their family members. The most recent titles have full colour covers and illustrations reproduced digitally. *Crossing Canada, 1907: The Diary of Hope Hook* (2011), edited by Juliet McMaster and a team of students, is a gorgeous, landscaped publication with glossy reproductions of original paintings by Hope Hook's grandfather James Clarke Hook, father Allan Hook, brother Duncan Hook, and grandson Sam Jackson. Many of the paintings depict the birds and sea life of the Canadian West Coast.

Juvenilia Press has now published work from seven countries: England, Canada, the United States, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, and South Africa (see figure 2).

### Authors Published by Juvenilia Press

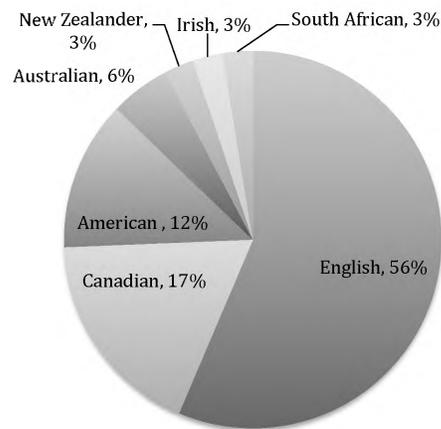


Figure 2. A chart of Juvenilia Press authors, according to the country they were living in when their childhood or adolescent writing was produced, created by Jonathan Diaz.

The English authors include eighteenth-century women writers now gaining ascendancy, such as Mary Wortley Montagu and Maria Edgeworth, plus famous Victorians, such as Christina Rossetti, Charles Dickens, and Alfred Lord Tennyson, and a few twentieth-century writers, such as Evelyn Waugh and Phillip Larkin. Canada is represented well by Margaret Atwood, Aritha Van Herk, Greg Hollingshead, and Rudy Wiebe. The five

American titles include works by Louisa May Alcott and Edward Albee. There are only two Australian writers, however, and only one title each from New Zealand, Ireland, and South Africa. Nevertheless, the expanded range of countries from the former British Commonwealth invites a comparison of young writers according to their geopolitical context. Juvenilia can at times sharply reflect wider historical shifts and articulate struggles in national identity.

The Juvenilia Press helps us remember that the productions of Jane Austen's youth, for example, are interrelated with the social realities of her time. This is most obvious in the text with her nation in its title, "The History of England," which she completed on 26 November 1791, approximately two years into the French Revolution. She eventually included it in *Volume the Second* of her juvenilia, along with "Love and Freindship" (1790), "Lesley Castle" (1792), and "The Female Philosopher" (1793). Austen's life was directly touched by the Revolution through her cousin Eliza de Feuillide, who moved from France to England in 1790 and whose husband was executed by guillotine. Christopher Kent dramatically argues, "Austen certainly had decapitation on the brain in 1791 as she wrote 'The History of England,' a distillation of the most violent episodes occurring in English history between the War of the Roses and the execution of Charles I" (60). Margaret Anne Doody also situates Austen's juvenilia historically by arguing these "short, sophisticated, parodic works" (104) reflect "the experimentation and boldness of the 1790s ... They belong not only to her youthful life but to a revolutionary decade" (105).<sup>4</sup> There is an edgy, satiric

4 That Austen may have been open to moderate, Girondist versions of *liberté*, *égalité*, and *fraternité* is suggested by her reading of Helen Maria Williams, best known for her *Letters Written in France: In the Summer of 1790 to a Friend in England*, a text which supported the ideals of the revolution (see Jane Austen's letter to her sister Cassandra, 24 November 1815).

5 Austen highlights a widespread cultural resistance to teenage girls' satire in *Sense and Sensibility* through Lady Middleton's views on the young Dashwood sisters, Elinor and Marianne: "Because they neither flattered herself nor her children, she could not believe them good-natured; and because they were fond of reading, she fancied them satirical: perhaps without knowing exactly what it was to be satirical; but *that* did not signify. It was a censure in common use, and easily given" (Austen 261). This was a censure Austen no doubt herself faced when sharing her juvenilia. Margaret Anne Doody argues that by the time Austen published *Sense and Sensibility* in 1811 there was much less room for blatant satire than there had been in the 1790s. However, in the 1770s and '80s female satire was already being questioned by women writers in figures such as Mrs Selwyn of Frances Burney's *Evelina*. Doody compares Austen's juvenilia to Burney's *Cecilia* (Doody 118) but makes no mention of *Evelina*'s witty but censured Selwyn.

defiance in the teenage Austen's "History of England."<sup>5</sup> French critic Pierre Goubert asserts that it is the most important piece of Austen juvenilia, tied with "Love and Freindship," and Peter Sabor observes that of the juvenilia printed individually, "the most popular has been "The History of England' with five separate editions since 1962" (xlv). Juvenilia Press has added one more edition since the printing of Sabor's survey.

This past autumn I included the Juvenilia Press edition of *History of England & Cassandra's Portraits* (2009) in a course on "Jane Austen and New Historicism," prompting students to analyze Austen's own view of history.<sup>6</sup> Scholars agree that the most likely source text for Austen's parody of popular historiography is Oliver Goldsmith's *The History of England from the Earliest Times to the Death of George II* (1771),<sup>7</sup> an abridgment of David Hume's *History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Revolution in 1688* (1762). Sarah Frantz explains that eighteenth-century abridgments for children did "not actually teach anything beyond [a] very few dates and supposedly vital details about individual monarchs" (xiii). Perhaps Jane and Cassandra, as intelligent children, felt condescended to by such books and so retaliated in their teens through satire. Children can easily pick up on adults' attempts to gloss over unpleasant realities in the past. So, in response, Jane and Cassandra render their adult monarchs very human, sinful, vain, even ridiculous creatures.

Undergraduate students delight in Austen's sharp moral satire, and after reading "History of England" my students gained a greater comprehension of the social and political implications of her irony. One student, Alyson Luthi remarks, "With a constant attention to vice and virtue, the young Austen translated the exalted characters and politics of history into a real world of daily politics." It is not a far leap from Austen's caricature of Queen Elizabeth I as cruel and scheming in "History of England" to her depiction of Lady Catherine de Bourgh in *Pride and Prejudice*. The cultural perception of monarchs, aristocracy, and rank, both at home as well as abroad, shifted after the advent of the American and French revolutions. One of my teaching assistants, Cambria Aviles, was struck by the irreverence expressed by Austen toward monarchs and suggested it may

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6 *Northanger Abbey*, a novel Austen began to draft as "Susan" in 1798, also provides a glimpse of her early views. The seventeen-year-old protagonist dislikes history and laments, "I read it a little as a duty, but it tells me nothing that does not vex or weary me. The quarrels of popes and kings, with wars and pestilences, in every page; the men all so good for nothing, and hardly any women at all" (Austen 110).

7 See Sarah Frantz xiii, Annette Upfal xv, Christopher Kent 63.

have been tied to public perception of George III. Aviles remarks, “The humor and satire in *History* is overt and obvious, with Austen brazenly defaming certain monarchs, Queen Elizabeth I being the most notable example.”<sup>8</sup> There is brutally honest satire in Austen’s juvenilia, and this is especially the case in “History of England,” a joint venture between Jane and her sister Cassandra. The hand-written manuscript includes mock-encyclopedic entries written by Jane, for each British monarch from Henry IV to Charles I, accompanied by portraits painted by Cassandra inside circles drawn with a half-guinea piece.

“History of England” is primarily a collaborative work, with both sisters amusing each other through their visual and textual irony. The witty modernist Virginia Woolf writes: “Brothers and sisters must have laughed when Jane read out loud her last hit at the vices which they all abhorred” (170). But, Cassandra’s visual caricatures of monarchs must have also delighted her sister Jane. In “History of England” the entertainment is reciprocal, as one sister builds upon the other’s satire. Woolf observes in Austen’s juvenilia a note “which sounds distinctly and penetratingly all through ... the sound of laughter. The girl of fifteen is laughing, in her corner, at the world” (170–71). But she is not alone in that corner; there are two girls—one fifteen and the other seventeen—laughing hysterically together at each other’s jokes, drawing inspiration from each other’s wit like a modern improvisational comedy team. Another modernist, G.K. Chesterton refers to Austen’s “Love and Freindship” as a “little skit” (viii) generated with “the sort of high spirits that are always higher in private than in public; as people laugh louder in the house than in the street” (xi). Chesterton evokes the world of private theatricals, which were indeed central to the Austen family household. In reading “The History of England,” one receives a glimpse into the role irony played in Austenian familial dynamics. Another of my teaching assistants, Sara Brio, was drawn to “the sprightly relationship detailed in the combination of Jane’s prose and Cassandra’s portraits, which paves the way for the sisterly camaraderie between Elizabeth and Jane in *Pride and Prejudice* and Elinor and Marianne Dashwood in *Sense and Sensibility*.” A particularly amusing example of such sprightly camaraderie exists in the ekphrastic tension between Cassandra’s portrait of Edward IV (see figure 3) and Jane’s prose.

8 In her introduction to the Juvenilia Press edition, Annette Upfal argues that Cassandra’s portrait (xxxvi) and Jane’s prose together comment critically on their mother Mrs Cassandra as “ugly and old,” and “bad-tempered” (xlv) by drawing parallels between her and Queen Elizabeth visually (xxxvi). While fascinating, this autobiographical analysis need not negate actual historical, political commentary presented by the Austen sisters.



Figure 3. Cassandra Austen's portrait of Edward IV.

Jane's accompanying entry states: "This Monarch was famous only for his Beauty & his Courage, of which the Picture *we* have here given of him, & his undaunted Behaviour in marrying one woman while he was engaged to another are sufficient proofs" (5 italics added). The "we" is communal, not royal, and emphasizes the joint labour of the two sisters. There is multi-layered ironic play between Cassandra's image and Jane's "caption." In Chesterton's words, throughout the early works there "is a certain neatness to the nonsense. There is not a little of the true Austen irony" (xi). In the case of this portrait, there is a neat ironic balance between image and text.<sup>9</sup> This dynamic interplay is lost in printings of "The History of England" that present Jane's text separately from Cassandra's portraits.<sup>10</sup>

9 Austen has been posited as a conservative follower of Edmund Burke, but this image of Edward IV certainly does not reflect Burke's claim that "young persons" naturally approach "kings" with "terror," "dread," and "awe" (*Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* 67).

10 The text was first printed for the public in 1922. This edition, *Love & Freindship [sic] and Other Early Works now first published from the original ms.*, reproduces all of Cassandra's portraits on the inside covers of the book, thus dividing them from Jane's accompanying text. The 1993 facsimile edition with an introduction by Deirdre le Faye reprints a photographed image of the manuscript, including the portraits, and then prints the text separately, for legibility, without the portraits. The Cambridge University Press edition of Jane Austen's *Juvenilia* (2006, edited by Peter Sabor) includes both a typed transcript of her *History of England* and a facsimile of the original manuscript with Cassandra's portraits (as "Appendix A"). *Love and Freindship and Other Early Works* (Barnes and Noble, 2005) and *Two Histories of England* by Jane Austen and Charles Dickens (Harper Collins, 2006) do not reproduce the images at all.

This loss was evident to me at a recent Jane Austen book club gathering in Santa Monica, California, hosted by Jane Krisel and led by Diana Birchall, which was devoted to the juvenilia. When I arrived, ready for discussion with five Juvenilia Press editions in my hands, I quickly saw that none of the other guests had *The History of England & Cassandra's Portraits*. Most were referencing the comprehensive Oxford University Press edition of Austen's juvenilia, edited by R.W. Chapman, one had a 2009 collection printed by Cambridge Scholars Publishing, and none had an edition with the portraits. When I asked them why they did not own Juvenilia Press editions, they cited two factors: lack of availability through Amazon, and the expense of buying each piece of Austen's juvenilia individually. The board of Juvenilia Press may want to take steps toward increasing the accessibility of their editions, especially given the unique window they provide into the dialectical relationship between text and image in youthful satire.

Images also generate satiric effects in the Juvenilia Press publication *Dick Doyle's Journal for 1840* (2006). Juliet McMaster suggests the memoir's illustrations anticipate Richard Doyle's combination of "two modes, realistic and grotesque" (xix) in his adult art. There was a burgeoning of illustrated classics marketed toward children in the early Victorian period, and Doyle naturally imitated these illustrations in his journal. Patricia Crown remarks, "Various marginal groups would have found book illustrations an accessible, even a primary source of visual art. They were available to those who were inhibited or secluded by lack of money, by geographic distance, custom, *age*, gender and timidity from free participation in public artistic life" (75 italics added). As a young Catholic, Doyle was doubly marginalized in Victorian London by his age and religion. This future illustrator of the serial *Punch*, William Makepeace Thackeray's *The Newcomes*, and Charles Dickens's *Christmas Books*, must have reveled in the proliferation of images for children in the 1830s, and by the time he reached his teens, in the 1840s, he was creating images of his own.

In the illustrations of Doyle's diary there is a move, to use bell hooks's phrase, "from margin to center."<sup>11</sup> He moves spatially from the periphery of congested London streets, associated satirically with the follies of mass consumerism and spectacle seeking, to a space of calm contemplation at the centre of the art world. One of his first satirical etchings depicts Londoners desperate to see a piece of Queen Victoria's wedding cake. There

<sup>11</sup> I have taken this phrase from hooks' groundbreaking text *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*.

is inherent irony in his image of a youth watching adults push aggressively into a confectioner's shop. Doyle uses hyperbole for comic effect. However, he also expresses real moral horror at the idolatry of a crowd so eager to worship a piece of cake. There is also a sense of true danger, especially to children, in his crowds (see figure 4).



Figure 4. Richard Doyle's representation of himself being crushed by a mob at "the illuminations" (28) celebrating Queen Victoria's coming of age.

In this later etching, Doyle has moved from the edge of the crowd into the fray. He is squished into the bottom right-hand corner of the scene. He recalls, "One great fat man began to throw himself against the people for his amusement while another said to a country looking man who had an infant on his head, 'D--n you what have you brought that child into the crowd to kill it for?'" (29). The violent crowds of the French Revolution were still very present in the early Victorian imagination, as evidenced by Doyle's depictions of anarchy erupting in the streets of London.<sup>12</sup>

The young Doyle ultimately triumphs over this threatening mass of adults. Near the end of his journal he is excited about an art exhibition at the Royal Academy and races through the mob to get the best view of the paintings. He writes, "There was a great scramble to pay first and then we darted up the stairs. There were about fifty besides us in the first rush almost in a body and we had a desperate race" (70). The accompanying etching shows a group of men running upwards so quickly the tails of their coats are flying, but near the very top of the scene are two boys, Doyle and his friend James Henry, close to the front. Doyle is rewarded for his speed

<sup>12</sup> At one point Doyle does describe "a most extraordinary riot at the Italian Opera house" (66) over the hiring of performer Antonio Tamburini. The accompanying etching shows men clobbering each other over the heads with blunt sticks.

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with unimpeded views of paintings, including Edwin Landseer's "Laying Down the Law" which depicts distinguished British individuals as a group of dogs, a scene with satirical implications of its own. As he gazes at the painting, and contemplates its mastery, the crowd recedes and becomes almost insignificant (figure 5).



Figure 5. Richard Doyle studying Edwin Landseer's painting "Laying Down the Law."

Through the development of his voice and his own artistic vision, the young Richard Doyle has moved to the centre of the scene, a vantage point from which he can freely view the work of another artist and express admiration with the uncanny confidence of a seasoned art critic.

When turning from the Georgian and Victorian offerings printed by Juvenilia Press to their fin-de-siècle Australian and South African publications there is an immediate, perceptible difference. The dangers faced by Australian and South African youths arise from exposure to the elements, and isolation, not crowds. Juvenilia Press's edition of Australian novelist Mary Grant Bruce's *Early Tales* (2011) includes two stories that end with the death of a child. Bruce's stories are not comic but tragic; they focus on the difficulty of human survival. In "Her Little Lad" (1898) a mother sends her son to gather wood in a forest, and the child picks up

a strange stick. It was soft, and bent and wiggled in the firm baby grasp, and then—ah, did heaven see?—it turned, and a wicked head shot out towards the little arm that grasped the bundle of wood, and from which the sleeve had been pushed back. It struck, and the little lad, feeling the sharp pain, dropped the cruel "stick" hastily. To his amazement it moved on the ground a moment and then wriggled away. (7)

The nineteen-year-old Bruce remarkably captures the subjectivity of a child through a narrative style that verges on free indirect discourse, but nevertheless the reader knows the stick is a snake long before the boy does.

When the boy drops the stick and is amazed to see it slither away Bruce alludes darkly, and ironically, to Exodus 7.10: “Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent” (KJV). In the biblical account this transformation is a miracle, a sign of divine providence, but Bruce’s narrator questions God’s presence, crying out “ah-did heaven see?”<sup>13</sup>

The one South African text published by Juvenilia Press, *The Diary of Iris Vaughan*, also describes natural threats, such as “scorpeons” (18), baboons, “terribul” (25) floods, “lightning” (55), and “swarming bees” (131), and raises questions about God, but this time in the comic voice of a pre-teen. When Vaughan is approximately twelve, she writes, “God must be very busy watching all in the world like how does He do it” (81). This is a comic yet also weighty question. Christine Alexander argues that juvenilia “may be as sophisticated as an adult production” (“Defining and Representing Juvenilia” 72), and Vaughan’s theological questioning does indicate an independent mind and critical consciousness. She is most cleverly satirical when writing about Sunday school. Vaughan and her family at first move from place to place, and when they finally settle in Adelaide, she writes, “We have been to Sunday School. I can see we will suffer for our religion like the children of Isrel in the desert” (49), and she later reflects, “I wonder if God likes Sunday School?” (53). Even near the beginning of her narrative she notices differences between the Dutch Reformed community and her own Anglican family, writing of her original home, “It has one beautiful church which is Dutch we cant go to it becos we English Church. I said to Pop what is God English or Dutch” (3). This is a bravely irenic question. Vaughan later warms to a Scottish Presbyterian minister in Adelaide and wistfully confesses, “I wished I belonged to Mr. Makles church. He only pats you on the head and says Lassie girl” (80).

Through her observations about the firm lines drawn between the Dutch and English in 1897, the seven-year-old Vaughan notes divisions that would culminate in the Boer War and also discerns the exclusivity of a particularly Afrikaner, distorted form of Calvinism that would later influence the establishment of apartheid. The term “apartheid” was first deployed as an election slogan in 1948, during Vaughan’s development as an adult writer. Juvenilia Press editors Peter Alexander and Peter Midgley

13 Later, when the boy is dying, the mother expresses Job-like anger at God, praying, “God! Holy Mother! Blessed Saints! Kill me, but take his pain away! Take me soul, yez’ll give me back my boy! Christ! Ye were a little child Yerself. Ye couldn’t let a baby suffer so. Make him betther—it’s wicked! What did my boy every do to yez?” (15).

note how in 1949 “Vaughan offered to contribute to a local newspaper, the *Adelaide Free Press*” (xxxiii–xxxiv), but they do not mention if she referred to politics. She must have. In her diary, she uses variants of the now derogatory Afrikaans term for black Africans, “kaffir,”<sup>14</sup> and her relationship to the term is complex. For example, when feeling the constraints of her codified English culture she yearns for a certain freedom she perceives in the black community, writing earnestly, “I wished I was indeed a kafer” (63). As Alexander and Midgley rightly note, Vaughan presents herself as a child sufferer of “injustices” (xxx). She is subject to wrongs exacerbated by her father’s alcoholic rages,<sup>15</sup> and I would add that her feelings of relative powerlessness within her own culture generate moments of sympathy with outsiders, whether Scottish or Zulu.

The move toward including more texts from Commonwealth countries has broadened the international scope of Juvenilia Press, and perhaps they could add even more global offerings from other countries in Africa, as well as Asia and South America. One cannot help wondering if Salman Rushdie or Chinua Achebe wrote juvenilia. Studies of Nigerian juvenilia, in particular, are beginning to appear, such as Bernth Linfors’s *Early Soyinka* (African World Press, 2008). Novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie wrote poems in her teens, including “May Massacre,” a ballad written on 27 January 1995, when she was only eighteen:

They suffered the senseless killing  
And their women painful rape.  
They, who for unity were willing  
Unprepared for their tribe scrape.

The “Sabon Garis” were looted  
And death awaited them still in awe  
At their race’s slaughter they were muted,  
Their killers disregarding all law.

The slaughter of innocents of one race,  
By another defying unity.  
They suffered for country’s grace,

<sup>14</sup> See pages 29, 39, 63, 74, 85, 100, 111, 118.

<sup>15</sup> For example, she describes the loss of the family dog, a traumatic event for a seven-year-old, after her father “coming home late at nite and getting sick and wanting to get out to throw up and leaving the door open” (11). She further explains that the dog ran away because her father had kicked it in his drunken anger. J. H. Jackson’s illustrations for the Juvenilia Press edition of Vaughan’s diary include two images of what Vaughan terms her father’s “savige” rage (67, 88).

And to their blessed memories great compassion, greatest  
pity.

Adichie's youthful, elegiac verse invites comparison with the Margaret Laurence sonnet with which this article began. Both young authors were eighteen when they composed their poems and both situate their imagery in a specific season, year, and place. Laurence does so through her title "Song for Spring, 1944, Canada" and Adichie in a footnote referring to the "May 1966 Massacre of about three thousand Igbos in Northern Nigeria" (*Decisions* 22). Just as Laurence's hope for the children in her poem indicates the early development of her "persuasively pacifist, and moral voice" (Reingard Nischik 317), Adichie's mournful protest provides a window into "the making of a strong female voice on the [Nigerian civil] war" (Henry Akubuiro paragraph 15).

However, there are also key differences, in both form and content, between these two poetic productions of eighteen-year-olds, one Canadian in the 1940s and the other Nigerian in the 1990s. Laurence's poem is more traditional and formal, following the required form of a Petrarchan sonnet exactly, with regular pentameter lines arranged neatly into a rhyme scheme of abba d d c e f g e f g. Adichie's verse is more boldly experimental and fluid. She begins with a ballad stanza, a quatrain of alternating four and three stress lines with an abab rhyme scheme, but she breaks from that pattern, most evidently in her final line of seven stresses. By choosing to write in loose ballad stanzas, Adichie aligns herself with a more democratic, folk protest form, as opposed to the classical Petrarchan sonnet. Finally, in terms of content, Margaret Laurence implies genocide through the date 1944, setting her poem near the height of the Holocaust, but she can move from that date to images of free children in her own country. Adichie's reference to genocide is much more explicit and local, from the use of "massacre" in her title to the following lines about "senseless killing" (1), "painful rape" (2), and the "slaughter of innocents of one race" (9). However, Adichie too provides hope, through the introduction of "grace" (11) into her poem, which leads into the spaciousness of her elongated final line about blessing, compassion, and pity.

The Juvenilia Press offerings prove works by children and teens can be not only highly entertaining, amusing, and witty but also convincing and edifying. They not only delight but also instruct and even caution. The bold, youthful, and honest commentary represented by Juvenilia Press is refreshing, whether satiric and comic (Austen, Doyle, and Vaughan), tragic and elegiac (Bruce), or lyrical and winsome (Laurence). Juvenilia Press has shown its audience that children and teens can write texts that speak into topics such as the destabilization of the monarchy during the French

Revolution, the riots in the streets of Victorian London, the formation of “a new Australian consciousness” (Pamela Nutt xvi), the international impact of the Second World War, and the cultural environment leading into apartheid. By adding new forms of childhood and adolescent writing from an even broader range of countries, the press could support sensitive, incisive, and hopeful young voices such as that of the early Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.<sup>16</sup> We need to listen to the ethical acuity expressed by teens today through mediums such as contemporary zines and street art. Children and teens continue to be outraged by the oppressive, hypocritical, and even violent behaviour of adults. The fresh, critical perspectives voiced by writers of juvenilia cut sharply through the overgrowth of adult indifference to clear possible paths for the future.

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<sup>16</sup> Adichie’s own early poetry collection *Decisions* is now out of print and very hard to find in North America. It could possibly be reprinted in a Juvenilia Press edition.

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