



Constructing Girlhood through the Periodical Press, 1850-1915 (Ashgate Studies in Childhood, 1700 to the Present)

Kristine Moruzi

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Focusing on six popular British girls' periodicals, Kristine Moruzi explores the debate about the shifting nature of Victorian girlhood between 1850 and 1915. During an era of significant political, social, and economic change, girls' periodicals demonstrate the difficulties of fashioning a coherent, consistent model of girlhood. The mixed-genre format of these magazines, Moruzi suggests, allowed inconsistencies and tensions between competing feminine ideals to exist within the same publication. Adopting a case study approach, Moruzi shows that the *Monthly Packet*, the *Girl of the Period Miscellany*, the *Girl's Own Paper*, *Atalanta*, the *Young Woman*, and the *Girl's Realm* each attempted to define and refine a unique type of girl, particularly the religious girl, the 'Girl of the Period,' the healthy girl, the educated girl, the marrying girl, and the modern girl. These periodicals reflected the challenges of embracing the changing conditions of girls' lives while also attempting to maintain traditional feminine ideals of purity and morality. By analyzing the competing discourses within girls' periodicals, Moruzi's book demonstrates how they were able to frame feminine behaviour in ways that both reinforced and redefined the changing role of girls in nineteenth-century society while also allowing girl readers the opportunity to respond to these definitions.

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