Just Kidding: Rethinking Childishness

Yoad Eliaz

Department of Education, The Max Stern Yezreel Valley College

Author Note

ABSTRACT

This paper calls for the application of concepts and ideas in queer theory to childhood studies. Following Philippe Ariés' (1962) deconstruction of childhood, sociologists of children have reconstructed it, influenced by feminist thinking; and the dominance of the latter in childhood studies has yielded discussions on children's rights and participation. It is my claim that the adoption of queer theory conceptions is necessary if the discourse of childhood studies aspires to participate in efforts to change social power structures. I thus propose to rethink childishness. In this respect, I argue for releasing the prevailing bounds of the children/adult dichotomy and challenging the call for "seriousness," which controls and supervises children and adults alike.

KEY WORDS: childhood, childhood studies, childishness, feminism, identity, queer theory

Althusser (2006) defines "ideology" as a collection of ideas, structures and institutions that determine the subject's identity and behavior. In that sense, childhood is an ideology (see Schnell, 1979) that designs and monitors children's and adults' behavior. It is a set of ideas and concepts concerning children's development, their states of being docile and well-behaved – or perhaps naughty, playful and rebellious. At the same time, it also determines and supervises adults' conduct as children's protectors, teachers and mentors – who encourage them to develop and urge them to fight for their rights. It oppresses adults not only operatively through the immediate familial tasks and chores incumbent upon them, but also intrinsically by forbidding them to be childish and non-serious. The ideology of childhood is thus not only an effective repressive measure for children, but also oppressive and depressive for adults. Moreover, the ideology of childhood designs young subjects who own an identity of powerless children, and designs the rest as subjects who own an identity of powerful adults – hence, reproducing social power structures.

Challenges to the childhood ideology have appeared as early as the early 1950s, when Merleau-Ponty (2010) argued against the child/adult dichotomy, claiming that we should not perceive the child only as "the other" of the adult, for "the difference between adults and children is often exaggerated" (2010: 132-133). About a decade later, Ariés' (1962) initiated the full deconstruction of this ideology. Thereafter, childhood studies have been the discursive framework within which deconstruction and reconstruction of childhood has taken place.

Contesting the child/adult dichotomy, Jenks (1996) calls upon us not to abandon the child for a radical difference or a split world. I build upon that argument by claiming that the essentialist approach to childhood, which focuses on otherness, difference and splits, needs to be discarded. One way to do this is to rethink the modernist concept of childishness.

THE MODERNIST VIEW OF CHILDISHNESS

Childishness: A Study in Adult Conduct (1930) is an essay by Cyril Scott (1879–1970) that offers a glance at the modernist concept of "childishness." Read through a contemporary outlook on children and childhood, it is easy to dismiss Scott as superficial or arrogant. However, to do so misses the reading that he was doing little more than acting as a spokesperson for a discourse well established among early twentieth-century upper-class men in Western societies. Locating him there allows us to see his ideas as reflecting the world view and ideology of his times.

Scott presents childishness as a key concept reflecting the crucial problems in society. His main argument is that "mankind has never grown up" (1930: 1). Incorporating the child/adult dichotomy with other "big dichotomies" of modernism – Civilization vs. Nature; Man vs. Animal; Men vs. Women – he claims they all represent one super dichotomy of Control vs. Lack of Control. These dichotomies appear in the text as obvious, and as reinforcing one another, thus forming a tautology in which the self-evident and the obvious are based on the presumed dichotomous structure itself.

The modernist ideology of childhood designs the modern adult by rejecting characteristics typical of children and promoting opposing qualities of seriousness. Scott (1930) argues: "Despite all their lovableness, the outstanding features of children are lack of control and lack of mental development" (1930: 95). His argument continues along the aforesaid dichotomous orbit:

Now, as the antithesis of the absence of a thing is the presence of it, it stands to reason that the outstanding features of true man or womanhood should be the possession of control both mental and emotional, and also the possession of what is colloquially called "brains" (1930: 95).

This logic leads Scott to compare women to children, claiming that both lack control. Worse, women lack the ability to "differentiate," i.e., to maintain boundaries between categories. Consequently, their behavior, like that of children, poses a threat to the social order:

The trouble with women, for example, is not that they have no mentality, but that they imagine they are thinking with their mind, when they are only thinking with their emotions. Some women even think with their uterus; when that is out of place then the whole of their ideas are out of place. … This is because they do not possess sufficient control to differentiate between uterus and truth... (1930: 96).

Scott terms the discursive act of connecting children's and adults' conduct as "analogy." For example, when discussing restlessness, he states: "If we accept the analogy between child and adult behavior, the rush of the present age is largely explained. … Motor-bikes and motor-cars … are the new toys of adults" (1930: 51-52). Scott's "analogy" is an interesting intellectual exercise, as he uses it not to merely pinpoint similarities between children's and adults' conduct, but rather to highlight outrageous, unacceptable similarities:

Children quarrel crudely and noisily about toys, about cakes, about everything and nothing. So do adults; they quarrel about money, creeds, the prayer book, women, border-lines, politics and a thousand things (1930: 2).

Children begin by promising to be good, and end by being naughty; political parties begin by promising to put all things right, and end by leaving most things wrong. A child will promise to sit still and find employment for the sake of gaining a lollipop, and a Prime Minister will promise to find employment to the fathers of thousands of children for the sake of gaining a vote (1930: 3).

Scott characterizes childishness as demanding attention; seeking to be loved; asking for respect and social power; wishing to control others; screaming loudly and hanging around; love trifles; whining; instability in relationships; greediness; vengeance; sadistic pleasure; lack of imagination; lack of compassion; egoism; dressing up and imitating others; pretending; and being attracted to games. In the eyes of our modernist author, a large part of the human is childish and should be reproved as such. Only a few virtues remain – primarily self-control and rationality (qualities attributed to the "philosopher").

Scott's analogy is a discursive practice of reproof, reproof of being childish. Childishness in Scott's text is condemned for its lack of developmental (and gender) barriers. The childish, as well as the womanish and the wild, lacks self-control. Lack of control is tolerable only within the boundaries of its legitimate group category. Hence, women belong to the adult category, but behave outrageously as if belonging to the children's category. Let children be childish, but childish adults should be rebuked outright. Scott's text presents the modernist binary conception of desirable order and control – as opposed to undesirable disorder and lack of control – as both plausible and taken for granted. Still, there is one thing which is even less desirable than lack of order and control: hybrid categories.

As childishness is a threat to the social order, segregation of children and of adults enables monitoring and control in order to prevent or reduce damage. Conversely, childishness has the potential to undermine the separateness of these categories. Scott's following statement illuminates how imperative the preservation of such segregation is for the bourgeois family: "We shall then marry not for the selfish desire of possessing one another exclusively for ourselves, but for the unselfish motive of providing a harmonious home for our children to be" (1930: 101). Thus, "childhood" is an important principle in the Western modernist ideology of the middle class, which calls for the protection of children, through which reproduction of the middle class is guaranteed. That's why Scott considers childishness a threat to childhood.

An additional look at the early twentieth-century Englishman's concept of childishness can be gleaned from Stainton Rogers and Stainton Rogers' (1992) discussion of masturbation by children. They argue that parents were guided about masturbation "from an evolutionary perspective, therefore stressed not its immorality, but its childishness, or developmental immaturity" (1992: 165). They quote John Gibbens: "Let him see you disapprove, that you think he is too old for such silly tricks, that grownups never do stupid things like that…" (1992: 165). Just as Scott claims that disgrace is not sinfulness, neither is it immorality. Apparently, at the beginning of the twentieth century, being childish and undeveloped was considered the worst human disgrace.

My central argument is that childhood studies should adopt a discursive practice that undermines the social order. Scott's discursive practice, in contrast, justifies the existing modern social order by drawing lines between developmental categories. An in-depth look at these justifications allows for a better understanding of the dynamics of modernist discursive practice and for the construction of a counter, post-modern discursive practice.

The discourse of childhood studies challenges the modernist viewpoint of childhood expressed in Scott's text. One of the basic concepts of this discourse (which evolved from the sociology of childhood), as described by Jenks (1996), is problematization of the perception of children as a biological or natural essence. Instead, Jenks offers the sociological paradigm by which childhood is a social structure that can only be understood within historical-geographical, cultural and political contexts. Thus, the central notion in childhood studies is that children are artificially constructed on the basis of social theory. This claim is quintessentially feminist, as one of the important struggles of feminist discourse is the liberation of women from essentialist, natural and biological conceptions. When Simone de Beauvoir (*The Second Sex*) stated that women are not born women, but rather become them, she was claiming that women are constructed by social theory. With this in mind, it is important to consider the feminist reconstruction of the ideology of childhood.

FEMINIST RECONSTRUCTION OF CHILDHOOD IDEOLOGY

According to feminist theory, the differences between children and adults may be perceived as similar to the differences between men and women. Accordingly, men and adults are privileged more than women and children. Feminist theory wages a struggle for equal rights for marginalized groups, including rights for children. Göran Therborn (1996) notes that the feminist movement of the 1960s was a model of international mobilization in support of children rights and the dominant force leading to a breakthrough in the politics of children. According to him, the increasing power of the feminist movement helped advance children's rights and conditions in two senses. First, it enhanced children's visibility, as the women's fight for their right to jobs and public positions put issues like maternity leave and day-care centers on the agenda. Further, as more women became politicians, this reinforced recognition of children in many contexts. Second, the movement advanced the conceptualization of children. In order for women to be recognized as individuals, feminist theory undermined the collective patriarchal concept of "family" as the basic social unit. Individualization of the family, in turn, paved the way to discuss children's individuality and rights.

But is the lexicon of rights indeed suitable for children's actual lives? Discussing children's liberty and equality with adults, and alluding to Descartes' distinction between freedom and power, Merleau-Ponty (2010) claims that, even though infants have equal freedom as adults, they do not have the power to realize that freedom. "Freedom is the same for all, but power, the ability to realize freedom, is not" (2010: 70). Liberty is meaningless when autonomy is absent, so inequality is inevitable between children and adults. "By definition, this equality does not exist and cannot be created between the adult and the child" (2010: 83).

Moreover, although the basic idea of rights campaigns – different but equal – may apply to children, the children are still perceived as most different and least equal of all. Being tiny, inexperienced and playful makes it difficult to challenge the essentialist approach to them.

Out of that criticism has evolved the concept of "ethics of care." Virginia Held (2006) argues that the values which determine family life are quality, care and respect, so that values like justice and rights are pushed aside. Similarly, Tom Cockburn (2005) claims that the discourse of rights excludes women and children, and therefore must be replaced by the discourse of the ethics of care. Children, he asserts, are not just consumers of care, but also caregivers. He maintains that the relationship between two parties should be equal – namely, that we must give voice to care recipients and not expect mere gratitude and silence from them.

Feminist theory has influenced childhood reconstruction on two fronts: as a platform for demanding equal rights and as an ethical framework of trust and care. The demand for rights presents the child as equal to the adult, while the ethics of trust and care presents the child as a partner with a unique identity in a mutual relationship of concern with adults. In both cases, childhood is reconstructed as a category in its own right, alongside the adult category. The feminist debate revolves around the nature of the relationship between the two categories.

It is my claim, however, that the boundaries between the categories of "children" and "adults" need to be dismantled if we wish to challenge social power structures. Rethinking the concept of childishness is a theoretical and practical means of doing so. For childishness is a social structure that does not belong to biological-age categories. Children are not always childish; while there is the potential of childishness in children, it is not their only potential. Nor is it only for children; it is a potential for humans of any age. In order to further this venture, I propose to implement ideas of queer theory in the discourse of childhood studies.

QUEER THEORY AND CHILDHOOD STUDIES

Following the work of Michel Foucault, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Judith Butler and others, the concept of "queer theory" was introduced in the 1990s. Whereas feminist ideas rest heavily on the notion that gender is part of the self, queer theory defies the normalizing tendencies of sexual identities and the sexual order itself. Not only does it undermine gender essential-natural-biological categories, but it also challenges all identities and institutions reproducing the social order.

It is possible to discern several intersections between childishness and queerness. Both appear at the very margins of the social order and refuse to obey that order. Preferring exaggeration, kitsch and non-seriousness, both appear as "camp." And both are androgynous.

Suzan Sontag's (1994) conception of "camp" suggests a connection between queer theory and childhood. She refers to camp as a cheesy style of exaggeration, ridiculousness and extravagance best exemplified by drag queens and kings and by Andy Warhol's persona and art, and, in her notes, she refers to both children's manners and queer manners. She points to the androgyne, embodying artifice and naïveté, as "certainly one of the great images of Camp sensibility" (1994: note 9) – an image that is applicable to both gay people and children. She refers with affinity to "Being-as-Playing-a-Role," "To perceive Camp in objects and persons is to understand Being-as-Playing-a-Role. It is the farthest extension, in sensibility, of the metaphor of life as theater" (1994: note 10) – a statement as true of queer pomp as it is of children at play. Sontag notes that camp is the very childish attitude of anti-seriousness:

The whole point of Camp is to dethrone the serious. Camp is playful, anti-serious. More precisely, Camp involves a new, more complex relation to "the serious." One can be serious about the frivolous, frivolous about the serious (1994: note 41).

As mentioned above, queerness is about undermining the order of things, whether this be the sexual order or any other type of social order. This is reminiscent of Emile Durkheim's reference to the socially subversive role of children, which is cited in the editorial of a 1997 *Childhood* issue[i]:

[C]hildren offer a living example of the very margins of that [social] order, its potential disruption, and in fact its fragility. Children, at a momentary basis, exercise anarchist tendencies and sociality up to the limits of adults' tolerance and often beyond. They are dedicatedly unstable, systematically subversive and uncontained … for adults to replicate such conduct beyond celebration or intoxication would be to invite the designation of eccentricity, at best, or at worst insanity. Children, then, always potentially challenge social order, and their constant promise of liminality maps out the space of the normal, the adult and the taken-for-granted (1997: 260).

Children's literature mirrors the connection between childhood studies and queer theory. Close examination of this genre shows that the boundaries between categories of children and adults are blurred. Jacqueline Rose (1984) asks what adults want from children through children's literature. Just as queer theory claims that social institutions construct identities and not vice versa, Rose maintains that the term "literature of/for children" is misleading, since such literature does not reflect childhood, but rather designs it. Zohar Shavit (2009) point to the effacing of boundaries between children and grown-ups in the texts. Yet, she notes the dominance of adults in the genre as those who write the books, buy them and criticize them. Shavit (2009) terms *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Little Prince*, *Winnie the Pooh*, *Watership Down*, *Lord of the Rings* and the like as "ambivalent texts" initially created for children and adults alike. Although formally considered children's stories and tales, they are largely read by adults, and in fact by any age group. All in all, these texts reject the children/adult dichotomy.

The rejection of dichotomous categories is the very argument articulated by Judith Butler (1993). According to her, categories serve as a practice of supervision and control, and as long as we accept the binary gender division and comply with fixed gender identities, we reproduce social power structures. If we wish to dismantle the prevailing power structures, and do away with supervision and control, we need once and for all to get rid of gender categories in favor of hybrid modes of gender. In short, queer theory struggles against classification and categorization of individuals, and in this sense, it is applicable to childhood in that the categories of child vs. adult – or child identity vs. adult identity – also constitute an essentialist basis for social power reproduction.

The applicability of queer theory to childhood studies is also reflected in the debate in queer discourse about the queer child and childish queerness. In his review of such publications, Michael Cobb (2005) notes that many queer theory texts deal with children, he argues that the presentation of the child has the potential to revive queer theory. My point is just the reverse: queer theory carries the potential to make childhood studies a subversive discourse that challenges the social order and social power relations.

According to Lee Edelman (2004), the representation of the child dominates political discourse. It is his claim that the image of the child constitutes futurist political thinking which justifies the institutions engaged in reproduction of the social order. Unwillingness to breed, he argues, leaves queers out of any fixed identity; consequently, they are slipping out of the hands of politicians, who need the "child" to sustain their futurist politics. Queers, states Edelman, cannot construct an authentic or essentialist identity, only a stance derived from the imperative of identity. My argument is that the same is true for childhood. Children's actual childhood – as opposed to the representation of the child's role mentioned above – has no fixed identity. Children have no fixed gender identity, nor complete national or civic identities. So as far as we consider their actual childhoods, they exist as a true threat to the social order.

Referring to identities and their dismantling, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) argue that every human being has the subversive potential to resist power by "becoming minor," that is, becoming a member of a suppressed and weakened identity. Ohad Zehavi (2010) suggests that in the context of minorities, Deleuze and Guattari's "minor" concept is not necessarily quantitative; it rather applies, for instance, to the sparse political power awarded to women, children and animals. Zehavi claims minor politics challenge the social order:

Minor politics allows for identities themselves to be challenged, for definitions to be shattered, for power relations to be fundamentally undermined (by undermining the factors – identities, definitions – that enable the exercise of power in the first place). Minor politics does not take place within a limited site but rather at the site's very limits, at its margins, which extend infinitely. This sort of politics sees little point in battling within the arena but sees no way of escaping the arena altogether. Instead, it rushes to the fringes, toward the marginal, minor characters who populate them, and who repeatedly bring about becomings that unceasingly unravel and reweave the social fabric (Zehavi, 2010: 39).

While Deleuze and Guattari consider "becoming-woman" as the ultimate minor, Zehavi claims that "becoming-child" is more appropriate:

The child thus points to an important channel of minor politics. Because the adult is rooted within the major order, becoming-child can allow him to escape, if only for the briefest moment, the arbitrary yet organized power of the existing order. An adult's becoming-child is a molecular becoming: it does not imply the adult's remembering or reproducing the full-fledged and domesticated molar child that he was, but rather the adult's forgetting himself for the sake of the babyish excitement that bubbles inside him, the childish tingling sensations skittering across his skin, the youthful follies that pass through his mind. The adult who rides the wild, childish wave that heaves within him and carries him away, detaches himself at once – if only for a second – from the major order in which he is rooted (2010: 40).

This concept of "becoming minor" reinforces my central claim that childhood studies should move beyond children's rights and improvement of their conditions. Rather, childhood studies can take an active part in the struggle to change power relations in society, as they can challenge the essentialist categories of children and childhood. Like the queer claim that sex, gender and sexuality are unrelated, one can argue that age, childhood and childishness are unrelated. Age is biological; childhood is a social structure; and childishness is a non-serious, subversive behavioral tendency. A queer conception of childhood thus challenges the forced

Page : 112

relationship between adults and their social role as derived from the ideology of childhood – namely, their adult role.

Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) "becoming minor" is but one way to blur the boundaries between categories so as to challenge political power structures. This can also occur in other discursive fields, such as role playing, anti-seriousness and old age. Each of these fields has the potential to push childhood studies radically, for each explores childhood without considering it the exclusive domain of children.

ROLE PLAYING

Childish anarchist tendencies, as mentioned above, are demonstrated both in kids' dramatic role-playing games and in drag queens' coxcombry. Referring to the movie *Paris is Burning*, which documents the fringe culture of Black and Hispanic gays and drag queens in Harlem at the end of the 1980s, Butler (1993) discusses the group's rituals – the drag balls. The practice of dressing up is understandable in the context of the group's life conditions. Poverty, ethnic vulnerability, gender and sexual marginality leave no real chance for the members of the group to enjoy rights. The dressing up carnival is a playful way to rebel against these conditions and against marginalization itself. When a member of this community dresses up as if he is an executive director or the opposite gender, he delivers a message: identity is no more than a performance – a sign we perform with our bodies.

These understandings are equally valid for childhood studies. Children are marginalized, perceived as undeveloped and non-serious. Their practice of rebelling against such prejudices is by playing at "as if" identities. "Imaginative role playing" and "socio-dramatic play" has a rebellious element. While playing, children study society (see Corsaro, 1992); they explore it as a field of imaginative and unnatural corporal signs. Our wee-sized brothers and sisters know better than anyone else that the body is a social sign and a social value. Their role playing demonstrates comprehension of the very truth behind each assemblage of social signs: there is no essential identity but only mere social privileges.

Role playing appears where there is no desire, strength or reason to follow the taken-for-granted social order. Those who cannot participate in the social order will play. This is not exclusive to children or drag queens. Indeed, I found it in the supermarket of an upper-middle-class Tel Aviv neighborhood among working-class employees who pack groceries in plastic bags for the well-off customers and who, unlike the latter, cannot afford to fly abroad on holiday. It is August and one of the grocery baggers informs his colleague that he is going to take a vacation abroad. The colleague knows he is "just kidding" and that this is role playing. "Yes, of course," he retorts, hitting his fist in his hand in a vulgar manner, meaning, "you will go, and at the same time fuck around, at last…".

Role playing enables not only the blurring or hybridization of categories, but also pliable counter-serious identities. In other words, socio-dramatic play is a common anti-identity practice for children and adults alike. It dismantles identity, which otherwise is determined by – and authorizes reproduction of – social power structures.

ANTI-SERIOUSNESS

Once we unchain children from the exclusive totality of a psycho-biological category, it becomes possible to rethink childishness as fertile ground for people of all ages. What, then, is childishness? Contrary to Scott (1930), I do not think childishness indicates lack of self-control, in children or anyone else. Nevertheless, it may appear in the context of social control. Childishness is an anti-identity approach; it characterizes various ways to undermine seriousness. What irony does implicitly, childishness does explicitly.

Seriousness expresses the dynamics of control and of maintaining social power relations. The word "seriously" is always followed by an utterance urging one to preserve existing social power structures. "Seriously, you aren't going to risk your job, are you?" or "Seriously, you don't believe things are going to change here." Childishness refuses to surrender to the seriousness of the obvious. It does not cooperate with the social order, its social structures or its solemn institutions. Expressions like "Don't be a child!" or "Are you kidding?"call the adult to order, to return to his/her identity, to be oneself and the same as oneself, reminding him or her of the cost of deviating from it. Still, adults, like children, can declare: "I'm out of this game," "Don't expect me to play."

Childishness is neither a doctrine nor a form of authenticity. In many cases, it lets kids and adults alike relinquish responsibility and reflexivity. As mentioned, children do not have exclusive rights on childishness, and, in fact, many are not childish. The anarchist tendencies that Durkheim spoke of (see earlier) are related not to children, but to childishness. Although many adults may be deadly serious, they may also be childish. Usually, manifestations of childishness are not elegant: we quit in a childish way, contrary to an adult imperative to stay; we may refuse, resist and insist in a childish way. Or conversely, we may surrender and obey in a childish way.

Childishness enables playfulness, which is vital for bending essentialist categories. Childishness can be a theoretical and discursive practice and, as such, capable of undermining social power structures. Blurring the boundaries between the categories of children and adults weakens social monitoring and control. In short, for children and adults alike, childishness is an option of avoiding one's imposed identity and becoming someone else; it enables one to rebel against the reproductive supervision and control of seriousness.

CHILDISHNESS IN OLD AGE

Some elderly people have a tendency for childishness. If we leave psycho-biological and other essentialist explanations behind, then "regression" and "dementia" are no longer relevant terms. Instead, rethinking childishness in old age leads us to grasp it as a rebellion against the power of the social obvious. Thus, the old person does not "return" to be a child, but rather dresses up in the identity of a child to shake off modes of conduct expected of him/her at this age. Childishness may prove a potential of rebellion to an elderly person who refuses to surrender to the social order.

The social order commands the elderly to adopt an identity which mainly embodies submission to the fact of life's end. These people are expected to mourn over relatives, lost skills and unrealized goals and accept the many losses they have suffered. Social obviousness

Page : 114

is particularly intolerant to them, requiring them to wear the most wretched identity, that of "flesh and blood."

Facing the enormous social power exerted on them, childishness is a fresh and lively option for elders. Dressing up as a child sends a defiant statement: "Stop selling me my losses and diseases of old age! I, the elder in front of you, am not old. On the contrary, I'm a child whose life is ahead of me. I do not accept the social role you impose on me." The childish old man may be tired of seriousness and hence adopt the playful potential of those who in any case have no more social privileges to lose.

CONCLUSION

Queer theory can rejuvenate childhood studies, opening new horizons for both research and praxis. Replacing the child/adult dichotomy with a varied spectrum of hybrid child-adult options can stimulate exciting new ideas about politics, sexuality, rationality, responsibility and self-reflection. This would allow future research to reconstruct children as rational, responsible and self-reflective beings. Related studies could deal with aspects of infantile, childish and childlike behavior among grownups, such as playfulness, nonsense and silliness. Such research could help scholars understand the possibilities embodied, socially speaking, in childhood. So, may we think of "coming out of the closet" in the sense of grownups exposing their childishness?

REFERENCES

i. Althusser, L. (2006). Ideology and ideological state apparatuses (notes towards an investigation). In A. Sharma & A. Gupta (eds.), *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader* (pp. 86-111). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

ii. Ariés, P. (1962). *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*. New York: Vintage.

iii. Butler, J. (1993). Critically queer. *GLQ-New York* 1: 17-32.

iv. Cobb, M. L. (2005). Childlike: Queer theory and its children. *Criticism* 47(1): 119-130.

v. Cockburn, T. (2005). Children and the feminist ethic of care. *Childhood* 12(1): 71-89.

vi. Corsaro, W. A. (1992). Interpretive reproduction in children's peer cultures. *Social Psychology Quarterly* 55(2): 160-177.

vii. Deleuze, G., & Guattari, P. F. (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

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

ix. Held, V. (2006). *The Ethics of Care: Personal, Political, and Global*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

x. Jenks, C. (1996). *Childhood*. London: Routledge.

xi. Merleau-Ponty, M. (2010). *Child Psychology and Pedagogy: The Sorbonne Lectures 1949-1952*, transl. by Talia Welsh. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

xii. Rose, J. (1984). *The Case of Peter Pan: Or, the Impossibility of Children's Fiction*. London: Macmillan.

xiii. Schnell, R. (1979). Childhood as ideology: A reinterpretation of the common school. *British Journal of Educational Studies* 27(1): 7-28.

xiv. Scott, C. (1930). *Childishness: A Study in Adult Conduct*. London: John Bale, Sons & Danielsson.

xv. Shavit, Z. (2009). *Poetics of Children's Literature.* Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

xvi. Sontag, S. (1994). *Against Interpretation.* London: Vintage.

xvii. Stainton Rogers, R., & Stainton Rogers, W. (1992). *Stories of Childhood: Shifting Agendas of Child Concern.* Toronto*:* University of Toronto Press.

xviii. Therborn, G. (1996). Child politics: Dimensions and perspectives. *Childhood* 3(1): 29-44.

xix. Zehavi, O. (2010) *Minoracy*. http://mafteakh.tau.ac.il/en/pdf/MafteakhE01-Minoracy.pdf.

Note

---

[i] Editorial introduction: Childhood and social theory. *Childhood,* August 1997, 4(3): 259-263.