**Title**

‘Trying to Draw a Map of a Child’s Mind’: A Study of the Influence of Childhood Experience on the Literary Works of J. M. Barrie through a Freudian Lens

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## Dedication

Granny Tess.

For always making sure I was happy, loved, and supported.

‘Thank YOU LOVE ALWAYS XxXX’

## Declaration

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university and it is entirely my own work.

Signed: 

## Abstract

This project aims to investigate what lies beneath the surface of J. M. Barrie's work, from his representation of fictional characters to his subtle references to perplexing themes in his diary entries and factual recollections of his childhood. Through the use of Sigmund Freud's theories, the thesis will trace strong, but often occluded, connections between Barrie's repressed early childhood experiences, and some of the characters that he created in some of his early books *Better Dead, Sentimental Tommy, Tommy and Grizel, The Little White Bird,* and his memoir *Margaret Ogilvy,* and of course, in *Peter Pan*, where the timeless child is juxtaposed with children who are growing into adulthood. In doing so, this reading will allow for an analysis of the repressed elements of Barrie's life, allowing them to be seen more clearly, which will enhance the significance behind his story-telling.

There are several of Freud's theories that occur in Barrie's texts, from the use of flight to the inherent instincts that drive us towards life or death. One of the most compelling, perhaps, is the use of dreams in *Peter Pan.* Freudian studies suggest that the ego's defences are lowered whilst we dream, therefore, our repressed feelings float to the surface, allowing an insight into how the unconscious mind works. Peter Pan appears to Wendy through her dreams, suggesting that Peter is an illusion of repressed desired feelings. Although dream analysis can be examined in the fantastical tale of *Peter Pan*, looking at the fictional novel in contrast to some of Barrie's texts that are rooted in reality, allows a clear distinction to be drawn between dreams that occur in childhood and those that the adult characters experience. This interlinks with the core conclusion of this thesis, that Peter is the result of Barrie's repressed desire to relive his childhood and return to a state of heightened consciousness. As Kavey and Friedman explain, Peter is a representation of 'the most appealing aspects of childhood,' with the most envious trait being his lack of memory (Kavey & Friedman, 2009, p. 10).

Furthermore, whilst the occurrence of dreams provides a foundation for this thesis, the stages of psychosexual development also provide essential information by giving an insight to the reason why Barrie described Peter Pan as the villain of the text. By remaining a child forever, Peter Pan cannot complete the five stages of sexual development; oral, anal, phallic, latency and genital (Freud & Strachey, 2000, p. 7), which is believed to be detrimental to the human psyche. Peter will forever live as a child, which means he will never reach maturity. Thus, this project will examine this idea of immaturity, and Barrie's depiction of the impacts caused by the failure to surpass childhood naivety, ultimately concluding that typical villainous traits such as immaturity, selfishness and impulsivity may impact others, but the full extent of consequences fail to affect someone whose conscience will never develop.

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I couldn't think of a more fitting way to open my acknowledgements than to start with one of the most compelling people I have ever met, my supervisor and confidant, Professor Eugene O'Brien. I still recall in 2014, when I entered the T118 lecture room in Mary Immaculate College in the first year of my undergraduate studies, Eugene was the lecturer of the fiction section of the module. There are a few things I remember vividly from those lectures; his welcoming presence when you had just entered this daunting phase of unfamiliarity in your life, his humour which included some (justifiable, in my opinion) remarks regarding another lecturer's colourful shirts and his commitment to the D4 accent of Ross O'Carroll-Kelly, and his approachability and interaction with students, before, during and after lectures. For the help, reassurance, and guidance I have received during this process, I will never be able to adequately convey the appreciation I have for you Eugene, but I am certain I wouldn't even be writing this without witnessing, first-hand, the love and enthusiasm you have for what you do.

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A poem written by my grandfather, Donal O'Brien to his wife, Bridget (Tess) O'Brien on her birthday.

I wish I could impress you, dear
With something I had done
Supported by a loving cup
Or medal I had won.
But I am not that capable
And I am not that bright
Although I have the confidence
Some day to reach that height
Because your love is giving me
The courage that I need
To keep on trying harder
And eventually succeed
Just give me time to work it out
And keep your faith in me
And if I stumble on the way
Lend me your sympathy
Someday I will present you with
A loving cup of gold
And all the cause for pride in me
Your heart could ever hold.

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# Introduction

> There could not have been a lovelier sight; but there was none to see it except a little boy who was staring in at the window. He had had ecstasies innumerable that other children can never know; but he was looking through the window at the one joy from which he must be for ever barred. (Barrie 2012, pp. 213-214)

The story of Peter and Wendy's adventure has become one of the most popular bedtime stories in households, with hundreds of children dressing up as one of the many characters for occasions such as World Book Day, which is celebrated annually in schools. However, in reading the book *Peter Pan* published in 1911, it becomes apparent that the intended depiction of the celebrated characters may have been misunderstood, or even sometimes overlooked. Was this an intended strategy by the author J. M. Barrie, or whether his work was the manifestation of a subconscious flow of writing, stemming from repressed memories? Barrie was a prolific writer, dividing opinions with his imaginative methods of composition, with theatre producers such as Sir Beerbohm Tree claiming he had gone mad whilst drafting *Peter Pan* as a play, whilst a fellow producer believed it to be 'the most thrilling pleasure of my life' (Fields 2004, p. 186).

Even before the popular book *Peter Pan*, 1911 was published, Peter's character first appeared in other books, with the story initially undergoing several drafts, and then going to stage to be performed at the Duke of York Theatre in London, and in theatres in New York City. One common recurring theme throughout his publications, however, was the overwhelming pessimistic attitude towards adulthood; a theme in a number of his works, from the idea of a man who would be of more use to humanity if he died once his societal role had been fulfilled, in *Better Dead* 1887, to that of a boy who would never reach that, or any stage,

of adulthood in *Peter Pan.* Therefore, this project will raise questions in order to investigate the reasons for this negative mind-set towards adulthood, examining how, and more importantly, why, it is represented through his literature. In order to begin to answer these questions, one must provide a context for his writing by investigating other works by Barrie; by examining the era in which he was born and grew up; and by analysing the influences around him during this time.

**Literature Review**

Barrie's connection with the Llewelyn Davies children undoubtedly created a framework for the creation of *Peter Pan*, thus, the use of Andrew Birkin throughout this thesis is critical for understanding the mind behind the author. The founder of www.jmbarrie.co.uk, Birkin created a website dedicated to the primary and secondary resources he collected when composing his book *J. M. Barrie and the Lost Boys* (1979), an informative biography that explored Barrie's life and relationships, with a particular emphasis on the bond he shared with Llewelyn Davies children. Birkin's novel delves into Barrie's fascination with the boys' innocence, and through the description of the development of their connection, Birkin provides the reader with a guide through their lives where one can see how the friendship formed, what his relationship was like with their parents, Sylvia and Arthur, and just how important Barrie became to the whole family when tragedy struck. Birkin and his team managed to reach out to Nicholas (Nico) Llewelyn Davies himself, who became 'a treasure-trove of stories and anecdotes' (Birkin 2003, p. 13) which aided his research. In his biography, Birkin also acknowledges Nico's discourse on the controversies that followed Barrie, and as he was the only brother alive after 1960, it became the closest anyone would get to the truth surrounding the situation.

There are a number of researchers referred to throughout this project that have spent a vast amount of time and effort developing theories and arguments on *Peter Pan,* both the

novel/play and film adaptation. Jacqueline Rose, in her publication *The Case of Peter Pan,* addresses the very nature of children's fiction, challenging the traditional view of innocence by highlighting the anxieties that are deeply rooted in the novel. Rose argues that children's literature is a manifestation of adulthood thoughts, with Peter's eternal innocence acting as a manifestation of desires and fears regarding growing up.

Some researchers such as Sarah Green and Adrian Smith develop the concept of sex and gender in Barrie's *Peter Pan,* with Smith investigating Wendy's position as a female in Victorian Britain, juxtaposing the expectations that fall upon characters of different sex within the novel. Smith goes on to examine Wendy as 'mother' in the Neverland, a concept that can be seen to resonate within many of Barrie's other texts. Whilst the majority of searches on J. M. Barrie produce endless results on *Peter Pan,* Andrew Nash however, writes about Barrie's career in earlier years, discussing the path that lead him to produce his most distinguished novel, from selling his first novel at railway bookstalls, to his rise to public prominence in 1888. Furthermore, this thesis references two of Nash's articles, where he dives into Barrie's early publications, *Better Dead* and *Sentimental Tommy,* offering a unique reflection on the role of societal influence on ageing protagonists who are affected by the afflictions encountered as they grow up.

The use of psychoanalysis as the theoretical framework for this thesis is supported by neuropsychologist Rosalind Ridley's extensive research on the portrayal of cognitive psychology in children's literature. Ridley has published many books and articles, which investigate the significance of childhood trauma and its impact on the adult psyche. In her studies, Ridley boasts Barrie's undeniable and remarkable understanding of the human psyche, which surpassed those of the scientific community (Ridley 2016), an observation that prompted me to look past *Peter Pan,* and investigate what role cognition played in other publications. Her book, *Peter Pan and the Mind of J. M. Barrie: An Exploration of Cognition*

*and Consciousness,* is referred through throughout this project, as Ridley forms a connection between Barrie, the grieving six-year-old who lost his innocence over one tragic accident, and Peter Pan, the eternally young boy who kills for fun and will never have to sacrifice his imagination in light of growing old. Thus, together, with Birkin's invaluable background information, and Ridley's psychoanalytical perspective, this thesis takes advantage of the gap in studies that psychoanalyze J. M. Barrie as an author, and not just the author of *Peter Pan.*

**J. M. Barrie and the Historical Context Surrounding his Prolific Years**

Whilst J. M. Barrie's contribution to children's literature in the Golden Age of writing was a valuable addition to the new methods of exploration of childhood in fiction, due to the differing genres of novels discussed, this thesis will focus on J. M. Barrie as a writer influenced by the Victorian period. In nineteenth century Britain, society was dominated by affluence and with classist notions of keeping up appearances. Those in the working class bracket knew their place, and those in the middle class would be under immense pressure to conform and fulfil expectations upheld by those around them. J. M. Barrie came from a middle-class family, and although they were wealthy enough to afford his education, his reluctance to accept the sizable gap that separated each class from each other can be seen through an analysis of his writing, 'his lordship may compel us to be equal upstairs, but there will never be equality in the servants' hall' (Barrie 2005, p. 11). In *Peter Pan,* the childminder for the Darling family is a Newfoundland dog named Nana, showing the desperation the Darling's develop in order to conform to the rest of their social class who would have, in some instances, employed multiple servants to carry out everyday chores in their home (Steinbach 2017, pp. 21-23). Evidently, the injustices that surrounded him pressed greatly on his mind and sensibility as he grew up.

Online groups such as www.jmbarriesociety.co.uk and www.jmbarrie.net have been

established to ensure that Barrie is not solely remembered for *Peter Pan.* However, it is important to note that the novel is one of his most insightful pieces of work, proving Barrie was a pioneer of cognitive psychology before his time. Books transport people to another world, where they can live through the characters they read about, and Barrie used Peter as an instrument or an avatar to allow the adult reader to return to the tranquilly and simplicity of childhood. The story features many of the elements of reality, such as fear, anger, danger, all which are part of the conscious mind on a daily basis. Simultaneously, flight, The Neverland, pirates and fairies represent reaching a consciousness free from repressed memories, where one's fantasies and desires have the ability to materialise. From the composition of this story, it can be analysed as a coping mechanism for life, with a slightly more optimistic tone in comparison to his previous novel *Better Dead*.

On deeper inspection of the life of J.M Barrie, it is clear that the biggest influences for his writing were the five Llewelyn Davies boys, with whom he became acquainted whilst strolling through Kensington Gardens in London. These boys would prove to become the inspiration and drive for Barrie's existence. The unconventional relationship between Barrie and the boys raised many questions around his intentions, intentions that have been scrutinised and dissected for years by many. However, this thesis will analyse the importance of childhood in Barrie's eyes, and how he used these adolescent influences, in conjunction with his writing, to access a state of higher consciousness, one which only children can obtain due to the pureness and innocence they possess. Thus, because of his in-depth studies and knowledge of the human psyche, and his many publications on childhood development, I have decided to use the theories of Sigmund Freud, a contemporary of Barrie, as a lens through which to analyse Barrie's life and work, in order to thoroughly interrogate his viewpoint and ideas from a psychoanalytic perspective.

**Barrie and Freud: Theoretical Framework**

Both Freud and Barrie were born into middle-class families in the mid-1800s, where they had the opportunity to read, write and study. Although there is no evidence the two knew of each other's work, the similarities between their ideas are striking. On a global level, Freudian theory slowly filtered through various modes of communication until he became a household name in the early 1900s (Phillips 2014, p. 91). Thus, although definitive proof cannot be provided in favour of the two knowing each other, one can at least allow this thesis to make the assumption that Barrie was aware of Freud's work, which was very much part of the intellectual conversation in this period as more and more people became aware of psychoanalysis. However, one of the most intriguing and indeed relevant parallels drawn between the two stems from their childhood upbringing: it was evident that neither Freud (Phillips 2014) nor Barrie (Barrie 2014) were their mother's favourite, and both of them were uncomfortably aware of the fact. Both envied the favourite sibling in their family, and in both cases, the favourite child tragically died before they could reach adolescence, Grubrich-Simitis claims, 'quite frequently it is some event in childhood that sets up a more or less severe symptom which persists during the years that follow' (Grubrich-Simitis 1997, p. 34), addressing the impact that trauma has on an individual, following them into their adulthood. Freud tackled this traumatic event by becoming overwhelmed with guilt and emotion over his reluctance to understand his brother's purpose when he was alive, and subsequently, experiencing shame over his wish that his brother would disappear.

By acknowledging and addressing the guilt he felt, Freud was able to grow more towards his mother, building a relationship on honesty and self-reflection. Barrie however, dealt with his grief differently, as he began to act and dress like his deceased brother in the hope he could replace him in his mother's eyes, which proved to be unsuccessful, as his

relationship with his mother became more and more distant as time progressed:

> Margaret Ogilvy was the driving force of the family, and all her hopes were focused on the aspiration that David would one day become a Minister. The six-year-old James was, by comparison, something of a disappointment. He showed no particular academic promise, nor did he possess his brother's looks. He was small for his age, rather squat, with a head too large for his body. In short, the runt of the family. (Birkin 2003, p. 28)

Here, Birkin shows the stark contrast between the two boys, from the prodigal son figure to the 'runt of the family' (Birkin 2003, p. 28). Whilst the death of a child is one of the most traumatic experiences any parent can go through, Birkin highlights the many reasons why Barrie's attempts to fill the void in Margaret Ogilvy's heart when David died could never materialise. These painful events experienced by both Freud and Barrie shaped their identities and can be considered as the foundation for their understandings surrounding childhood.

Whilst psychoanalysis is utilised this thesis, it is important to address the controversies that surrounded some of Sigmund Freud's theories. Carl Jung and Alfred Alder, who both worked closely with Freud in his earlier years, began to criticise the core of psychoanalysis. Although they shared an extremely strong bond in the infancy of Freud's publications, Jung found himself disagreeing with Freud's overreliance on sex. Most psychoanalysts agreed on the unconscious processed, however, Jung objected to Freud's assertion that all impulses and origins of the unconscious are derived from sexual drives (Ayuba 2008, p. 160. Other critics such as Erik Erikson placed the emphasis on social determinants of the human personality rather than Freud's emphasis on the biological factors (Ayuba 2008, p. 160). William James also grappled with Freud's reductionist approach to psychoanalysis, claiming that mental events are 'inseparable from the context of its occurrence', asserting that every reaction to an event is dependent on every other event that gas occurred previously. Thus, James also failed to reinforce the Freudian dependence on the detrimental impact of interrupted sexual

development in a child. With these criticisms taken into consideration, Freud has undeniably contributed to psychoanalytic practices that are still used today, such as theories on the unconscious mind, defence mechanisms and the impact of childhood experiences on adulthood. Freud's theories on sexuality and sexual development were revolutionary in the early 1900's and although they have faced criticism, they contributed immensely to the field of psychology.

Interestingly, Sigmund Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* was first published in the year 1900, two years before Barrie released his first publication in 1902, *The Little White Bird*, that introduced the character Peter Pan to the world. This was the beginning of Peter Pan's story, where he was first familiarised with the reader and later, his adventures were developed in a separate book entitled *Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens.* In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud discusses how dreams are a manifestation of unfulfilled desires, 'the interpretation of dreams is the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind' (Freud 2010, p. 604), a concept that will be developed in Chapter 3 of this thesis. Barrie was known for his pessimism towards growing up, and in his books, Peter appears at night-time, which is associated with sleep and dreams. This depiction of a child who would forever remain young, who comes alive after dusk, can be seen as a representation of Barrie's deepest desires.

Furthermore, the use of flight, the presence of mythical creatures, and the calm and casual depiction of violence and death whilst shifting from The Neverland to the comfort of a family home, conveys a flow that directs us from the conscious to the unconscious in a matter of seconds. Kidd reminds us when utilising Freud's theories as theoretical framework, it is important to remember psychoanalysis is not a fixed term, describing it as 'ever-shifting constellations of ideas, forms, and practices' (Kidd 2011, p. xix). as it involves the study of the unconscious mind that is unique to every person. Hence, this is why psychoanalytic theory is valid in attempting to understand the workings of the human mind and how Barrie's writing

acts as a window to his inner psyche, and this thesis will use Freudian theories to read the texts and reveal aspects of the psychoanalytic biography of J. M. Barrie: friend of children and metaphorical father of the eternal child that is Peter Pan.

Freud's discussion of the five psychosexual stages of development in 1905 claimed that from birth, an infant is driven by sexual desire, and the way in which this is dealt with, will follow them into adulthood and thus, shape their personality. He claimed that each stage involves an infant satisfying their sexual drive, and a fixation on any one of these five stages will affect their development, thus, potentially manifesting within the individual as a mental illness or disorder in later years (Freud 1997, pp. 168-169). As previously mentioned, when Barrie was six, his brother's passing signified a loss of identity for him, as he began to impersonate his brother in order to gain his mother's affections. According to Freud's theory of psychosexual development which will be discussed in Chapter 1, Barrie would have been in the late phase of the Phallic Stage (Freud 1997, p. 36) and edging towards the Latency Stage, when David's death occurred. Barrie's mother rejected his continuous attempts to bond, and therefore, her dismissal became the beginning of his misfortune. According to Freud, issues experienced in this stage result in trouble in establishing sexual relationships in adulthood. Barrie was reserved when it came to his sexuality, and even his marriage to his Mary Ansell was believed to be unconsummated (Birkin 2003, p. 23). Furthermore, Barrie described Peter Pan as a demon child, claiming he was the only villain the story ever needed (Birkin 2003, p. 15), however, 'good and evil is always dependent on perspective' (Dillon 2017) and whilst the perception of Peter Pan has been transformed over the years, it is vital to acknowledge Barrie's view on the character. It could therefore be concluded, that Peter Pan is the villain of the novel for Barrie, due to his inability to sexually mature, suggestive also of Barrie's worries in relation to his brother who died before becoming an adult:

> The fact that here was a demon boy who not only has no love in him, but steals children

> from their beds in the night, changes sides in a fight, and kills without conscience, was ignored. It was not in the nature of the production that anyone should notice. (Dudgeon 2011 p. 177)

Dudgeon draws attention to the ability to overlook immoral choices when the individual making the decisions is a child. Thus, the innocence of childhood, and the blissful ignorance that accompanies it, can be seen as appealing to Barrie once again, as it is only in adulthood that these suppressed issues materialise.

Barrie is known for his creation of the boy who would never grow up; however, during its infancy, and seven years before the book was published, the story of Peter Pan was represented on stage, where a woman named Nina Boucicault played the part of Peter. Soon after, when the play came to New York, the role was given to Maude Adams, a well-known American actress. The motive for this female representation of the character was twofold: firstly, children were not allowed on stage after 9pm in the 1900s, and secondly, the producer of the play, Charles Frohman, concluded that no grown man could adequately convey and represent the essence of Peter Pan (Fields 2004, p. 186). This was the beginning of a change that happened in the 1900s, which saw women being chosen to play more roles in theatre. Without realising it, Barrie indirectly changed the world of theatre for women all over the world from that moment on. Even to this day in the twenty-first century, more women have taken up the role of Peter than men, which shows the lasting impact the original casting had on future renditions of the play.

In any in-depth study and analysis of James Matthew Barrie's life, while it is uplifting to celebrate his achievements and contributions to children's charities, this thesis must address the controversies surrounding his relationship with the Llewelyn Davies boys, in order to provide an unbiased viewpoint on the nature of the relationship. During his time spent with the main influences for his writing, Barrie developed an unbreakable and undeniable bond with the

boys he met while strolling in Kensington Gardens. This relationship, along with some uncomfortably comparable references to his own life in his writing, triggered widespread apprehension by psychiatrists and critics (Birkin 2003, p. 22) regarding his intentions while interacting with the children. This in turn became a focal point of studies around Barrie. Scholars such as Lucie Sutherland claim there is no possible way of finding out whether it was a mutually innocent relationship between them, or if Barrie delivered a convincing disguise of an adult trapped inside a child's body whilst committing the ultimate sin (Sutherland 2011, p. 235). However, to conclude with this would be to disregard the constant reassurance regarding the innocent nature of Barrie's relationships, which was provided directly by the people involved, namely the Llewelyn Davies boys themselves, and Nico – the youngest brother and the one who lived the longest – in particular, 'Barrie was a lover of childhood, but was not in any sexual sense the paedophile that some claim him to have been' (Birkin 2003, p. 15). He asserted that although Barrie was closer to his other brothers, he would have been more than aware had there been something more going on between them, and even maintained that Barrie was not a sexual being in any sense of the word, 'I don't believe that Uncle Jim ever experienced what one might call 'a stirring in the undergrowth' for anyone — man, woman, or child …' (Sutherland 2011, p. 235).

Therefore, whilst these concerns will be addressed in order to depict the context in which his books were written, the project will not be aiming to prove that Barrie had at any stage, committed a violation against the children he befriended, and ultimately ended up caring for through the various stages of their adolescent and adult lives. By providing an argument for Barrie's innocence, one can move past the aforementioned claims, and begin to analyse the reasons why he forged stronger bonds with children than he did with adults. As previously mentioned, this thesis will argue that Barrie's use of children in literature can be seen as an attempt to achieve a heightened state of consciousness, therefore, by surrounding himself with

children that he adored every day, he had the opportunity to observe them first hand as they went through daily life without worries or woes, oblivious to the struggles and depression that would await them in adulthood. Through his interactions with the boys, Barrie gets as close as possible to reliving his own childhood, where life was simpler.

With his life and relationships constantly under scrutiny, it became apparent that the creation of *Peter Pan* was a form of expression of Barrie's personal struggles growing up as a heterosexual male in Edwardian Britain (Kavey & Friedman 2009, p. 135). The focus on his sexual life, sexual orientation and sexual intentions in particular weighed heavily on Barrie.

Peter's character has become one of the most universally recognised examples of a gender- fluid character in literature. In *Peter Pan*, binaries are presented as societally developed, and then deconstructed in the fictional work, which is indicative of Barrie's apprehension towards societal roles. Mr. Darling is the breadwinner of the family, who spends hours calculating finances and keeping up appearances, as White claims he is aware 'in order to participate in social life, one must give up at least some of one's essential selfishness' (White 2006, p. 16). He also exhibits extreme outbursts of rage and self-pity, 'Nana also troubled him in another way. He had sometimes a feeling that she did not admire him' (Barrie 2012, p. 6). However, when the children disappear, he swaps position with Nana, the canine child-minder, residing in the doghouse riddled with guilt and self-blame for their absence. Whilst Wendy conforms to her role by fulfilling the missing maternal position in The Neverland, Peter becomes the paternal influence, protecting and correcting the children, all whilst wearing green tights, proving that throughout his appearances in Barrie's writing, he 'occupies an unstable position in a binary system of gender' (Kavey & Friedman 2009, p. 173). Peter deconstructs so many binaries that, as formerly stated, anyone can play his part: man, woman or child. Therefore, by exploring Peter's non-binary traits, this project will aim to prove that Peter can be seen to act as a metaphor for Barrie's androgynous state of mind, representing

his hopes and desires for a culture without relentless trial via judgement in an age of societal stereotypes. The way to achieve this, is through the mind and eyes of a child, where binaries are invisible and as yet, not reified or made concrete.

The inevitability of death and the end of life, is another aspect of our existence that becomes the centre of ontological thoughts for most adults. Even the opening paragraph of *Peter Pan* addresses this unavoidable truth:

> All children, except one, grow up. They soon know that they will grow up, and the way Wendy knew was this. One day when she was two years old she was playing in a garden, and she plucked another flower and ran with it to her mother. I suppose she must have looked rather delightful, for Mrs. Darling put her hand to her heart and cried, 'Oh, why can't you remain like this for ever!' This was all that passed between them on the subject, but henceforth Wendy knew that she must grow up. You always know after you are two. Two is the beginning of the end. (Barrie 2012, p. 1)

This is a concept that weighed heavily on Barrie, which can be seen in many of his novels; the untimely death of his brother being one of the most traumatic events of his young life, which would impact him throughout his own adolescent and adult life. Thus, Barrie toyed with the idea of whether death as a child was a blessing or a curse: a precious life taken too soon, or a sweet escape from the burdens that would inevitably follow. Whilst Chaney, in her publication *Hide-and-Seek With the Angels*, claimed that Barrie used escape as a 'mechanism to survive reality' (Chaney 2005, p. 20), I will look at the main route of escape that acts as a hermeneutic lens throughout his life, namely his imagination. Chaney's use of the word 'survival' discloses a depth to Barrie's attitude towards life, as between the moments of illusive, all-consuming make-believe Barrie submerged himself in, the inevitability of death loomed in his subconscious. The words 'death' and 'die' are mentioned a total of seventeen times in his earliest novel, *Better Dead* written in 1887. Similarly, the topic of death is mentioned eighteen times in *Peter Pan*, which is a significant statistic to note considering the context and genre of

each text. Freud developed a theory later in his career that was referred to as 'The Death Drive', which will be discussed in depth in Chapter 7. It claimed that being human and destined to die at some point, is an instinctual state of being, 'phenomena of life in organisms must appear no less bewildering. The hypothesis of self-preservative instincts, such as we attribute to all living beings, stands in marked opposition to the idea that instinctual life as a whole, serves to bring about death' (Freud 1961, p. 33).

Through his writing, it becomes clear that Barrie is overly conscious of the surrounding anguish of the unrelenting thoughts on mortality. His focus on the constant ticking of the clock is evocative of the impact the certainty and finality of death had on him throughout his adult life, 'the crocodile passed him, but not another living thing, not a sound, not a movement; and yet he knew well that sudden death might be at the next tree, or stalking him from behind' (Barrie 2012, p. 172). In *Better Dead*, the overall pessimistic theme of the novel is prominent, with Andrew, the protagonist finding himself in a society that believes each person who has fulfilled their purpose in life should be killed in order to free up space for others. Ultimately Andrew returns home to discover the natural circle of life will always continue. Freud suggests however, that the fear of death is often a misinterpreted feeling, as generally we are only present as spectators as we attempt to imagine what dying is like (Freud 2015, p. 25). Therefore, the creation of The Neverland and Peter Pan can once again, be perceived as a coping mechanism in order to deal with his anxiety towards death, and with the grief he experiences from the unfortunate loss of a loved one. As angst overwhelms him, flooding his mind and thoughts, he longs for the strength and resilience he once knew and felt as a child, the same resilience Peter Pan exhibits repeatedly.

'Fantasy is hardly an escape from reality, it's a way of understanding it' (Alexander, 1994). Freudian theory claims that the use of imagination is a temporary solution for coping with pain and anguish, and that in the end, reality will always be around the corner, reminding

us that we must be grateful of any form of escape we can find, 'illusions commend themselves to us because they save us pain and allow us to enjoy pleasure instead. We must therefore accept it without complaint when they sometimes collide with a bit of reality against which they are dashed to pieces' (Freud 2014, p. 10). Barrie is an author who conveys both fantasy and reality in such close proximity to each other, that the reader finds themselves in the comfort of their home, suddenly in mid-flight through the air, on route to a world consumed by magic in the space of just a few lines. Alexander's quote suggests that the use of fantasy in literature is not just a getaway from the confusion experienced in life; it is in fact, a guide on how to comprehend it, therefore expressing it through other techniques. The use of flight is especially significant in relation to psychoanalysis, as along with its functioning as a symbol of the oneiric realm, it also repeatedly reminds the reader of the inevitable danger of falling back to reality. Flight becomes a representation of the power the mind has to transport itself to a place of comfort, once one can fully commit to it. In *The Little White Bird*, Barrie addresses the importance of belief when it comes to connecting the binaries of reality to fantasy:

> It is a blessing that he did not know for otherwise he would have lost faith in his power to fly and the moment you doubt whether you can fly you cease for ever to be able to do it. The reason birds can fly and we can't is simply that they have perfect faith for to have faith is to have wings. (Barrie 1930, p. 55)

This quote is an exemplar of Barrie's extreme views about the binaries of childhood versus adulthood. For him, the change from one stage in life to another comes with an immeasurable volume of anxiety and apprehension; therefore, he attempts to highlight the transformational power of the mind, as through imagination, one can *fly* or be transported to a place of happiness, if one can just believe, and thus, reclaim the innocence of childhood. Life does not always have to make sense; as children we ask adults questions and have faith in the answers we receive; whereas, as adults, we ask questions, and we question the answers. Barrie urges his audience

to have more faith in their own abilities, and to acknowledge that sometimes, as proven in childhood, ignorance can indeed be bliss, 'I'm not young enough to know everything' (Barrie 1999, p. 7). Therefore, once again, he uses binaries to show how children, aided by their resilience and faith, hold the key to happiness due to their lack of repressed thoughts. Hence, this project aims to use psychoanalytical readings of J. M. Barrie's life, writing and influences, in order to show how he used various instruments and outlets as an aid to survival, transporting his adult-self to another world of heightened consciousness, just like in The Neverland.

In the early 1900's, Barrie went on to create the story of The Neverland which stemmed from the friendship that was first established between Barrie and the aforementioned Llewelyn Davies boys. He began playing games and telling them stories, usually staring the children as the characters, which resulted in the creation of *Peter Pan*, 'the play, written on the back of Barrie's games with four of the five sons of Arthur and Sylvia Llewelyn Davies … was always a work of improvisation and underwent constant revision from the moment of its first rehearsal' (Dudgeon 2015, p. 12). This encounter proved that these children stirred up a certain emotion in Barrie, one that resulted in scrutiny and questioning of critics for years to come. However, I will aim to conclude that this emotion did not stem from inappropriate intent, allowing this thesis to concentrate on Barrie's fascination with the innocence of childhood. It was an emotion that reminded him of his own childhood, recalling how it once felt to be truly free. They reminded him of a time when he was at his happiest, and through these boys, Barrie began to relive his own youth.

According to Freud, the human personality is determined by the id, ego, and superego. Whilst the id is driven by the pleasure principle and the urge to instantly fulfil desires, the ego controls them, taking reality into account, and acknowledging that it is not always possible to satisfy these urges. The superego is a moral compass, becoming internalised as our conscience, taking into consideration what is right and what is wrong as set out by society and culture, and

dealing with the consequences of decisions. Thus, using Freud's theory it could be argued that Barrie had unconventional ideas on how to address his desire for eternal youth, however, the ego and superego worked together to allow him to use his storytelling to access the place of pleasure, and that this may well have been a displacement of any sexual urges, either conscious or unconscious. For Barrie, it stemmed from an innocent intention, namely, to once again be a child by surrounding himself with other children, he just needed to figure out how to achieve this goal. Freud claimed that an imbalance of one of the three personality determiners resulted in an unhealthy personality in adulthood. Furthermore, Freud suggested the death drive, or Thanatos, is also located in the id, which is responsible for self-destruction and the urge to return to an inanimate state of being. Therefore, with both of these taken into consideration, Barrie's unusual personality traits may be attributed to his overwhelming and overactive urges deriving from the id in his psyche.

Whilst completing my undergraduate programme, I took particular interest in the studies on the human psyche, and the psychoanalytic interpretation of novels, and how it ultimately can transform our original opinions and understandings, creating another world of meaning for the reader. Such readings analyse texts in terms of hidden meanings and underlying patterns, all of which is useful in obtaining a rounded picture of a writer and their work. I always found J. M. Barrie to be an intriguing individual, with his biography leaving as much of an impression on me as did his writing. Whilst beginning my studies, I discovered the abundance of aforementioned questionable accusations surrounding his intentions with children. I believed in order to truly examine his literature, I needed to analyse his life, reading about his experiences and interactions, whilst retaining an unbiased personal position in an area of accusatory statements. Barrie's fascination and obsession with children was condemned in 1900 Victorian Britain. However, today, with the use of psychoanalysis, I consider Barrie's preoccupation as a representation of the childhood that he was denied. Furthermore, during my

investigations, as expected, I discovered numerous studies completed on the Peter Pan play and novel; however, the majority of them lacked a psychoanalytical perspective. This provided a window which allowed me to develop my ideas and theories on J. M. Barrie using the work of Sigmund Freud. I believe, although there is no concrete evidence of the two reading each other's work, that the thematic and intersubjective connections and similarities between J. M. Barrie's fiction and Sigmund Freud's theories are undisputable, and therefore, I decided to use psychoanalytic theories to interrogate the life and literature of J. M. Barrie for the purpose of this research project.

Previous connections have been made between Barrie's *Peter Pan* and Freudian studies, examining how theories such as the Tripartite Psyche Model or the Oedipus Complex can unearth an abundance of information surrounding Barrie, his choices, and his attitude towards life. Focusing on specific elements of Barrie's life without the use of psychoanalytic theory raised questions, such as the nature of the many close relationships he maintained with children. Whilst analysing the Freudian Tripartite Psyche, Jessica Autiero shows how the fictional characters in *Peter Pan* represents the parts of the human psyche in action, 'Hook and Peter are both the outcome of an uncontrolled Id which resulted in them being unable to become part of the conventional society, and are therefore to be considered not just lost but also to live meaningless lives' (Autiero 2018, p. 23). Similarly, Michael Egan highlighted the striking level of extremities in Barrie's personality traits, using the same theory Autiero utilised, in an attempt to understand the functioning of his psyche, and how his calm, quiet, and logical thoughts could change quite quickly to cynical and pessimistic in nature (Egan 1982, pp. 37-42). With other academics such as Nell Boulton (2006) weighing in on the study, focusing on the narcissism that embodied Peter and what that ultimately says about the author. By acknowledging these studies and using them together, I began to realise the one common theme that recurs, Barrie's love for the essence of childhood, must remain at the core of my thesis.

I have also found that there has been surprisingly little work completed across the full range of Barrie's texts including the novels *Better Dead, Sentimental Tommy, Tommy and Grizel, The Little White Bird* and his memoir *Margaret Ogilvy*. Andrew Nash (2015) touches upon the satirical nature of Barrie's *Better Dead,* which opened a door for this thesis to consider why Barrie chose to portray realistic scenes through an autobiographical satirical tone in this novel, when other works opted for hints of autobiographical writing through a fantastical element of storytelling. Furthermore, Nash (1999) delved into the publication of *Sentimental Tommy,* explaining the process that was involved in the creation of the story, as Barrie regularly changed the emphasis on specific characters to mirror his life-circumstances at the time of writing. Thus, these previous publications added to my interest in applying psychoanalysis beyond the mind of the author that created *Peter Pan.* Although all of Barrie's earlier works differ in style, content, and the intended audience from his more famous texts, by analysing these novels in terms of the circumstantial background of Barrie's life, I believe that a more complex picture of his life and ability emerges. It is because of this, that I decided to broaden my original project, to include other works by Barrie. By drawing these ideas together, I came to the conclusion that there was a common recurring theme throughout his writings. Through children, Barrie returns to a state of happiness and ignorance, which is impossible to attain as we mature – through his literature, he repeatedly utilises the state of innocence to live in full consciousness, where repressed thoughts and desires are minimal. By solely reading biographical details on his life, I do not believe I could have come to this conclusion and thus given him the critical status he deserves.

Rosalind Ridley, in her book *Peter Pan and the Mind of J. M. Barrie,* acknowledges Barrie's psychoanalytical advances when studies on the human psyche were in their infancy. Similarly, she aims to demonstrate the thought processes behind the composition of *Peter Pan.* In the preface she explains:

> My aim in writing this book is not simply to write about J. M. Barrie, or about Peter Pan, or even just to describe what Barrie was doing when he wrote the Peter Pan stories. This book is really about what Barrie thought he was doing, or intended to do, when he wrote these stories. (Ridley 2016, p. iv)

She goes on to mention his *whimsicalities*, a term which both Andrew Birkin and Jacqueline Rose liken to the state of being sentimental, representing aspects of error of cognition, which I will argue are intentional instruments to adequately depict the loss that comes with maturation. If one were to read *Peter Pan* to a child, that child may experience excitement caused by the fairies, a talking dog and pirates (Barrie 2012). Reading it as an adult, however, causes an onset of questions, as one attempts to make sense of the recurring whimsicalities, thus, proving the childhood mind is a simpler, and more pleasant place to be, a place of heightened consciousness. Ridley goes on to highlight the portrayal of Mr. Darling as the cause of all the issues and problems in the home as an indication of his compromised mental state, and perhaps this can be seen as signifying his suffering from clinical depression. I believe this perspective would become much more grounded if we were to juxtapose Mr. Darling with the protagonist of *Better Dead*, Andrew, who is also an adult struggling to find and hold his place in society. Andrew finds himself as part of a society that attempts to make an immoral act moral, by justifying a means to an end, 'have you ever seen a farmer thinning turnips? Gentlemen, there is an example for you. My proposal is that everybody should have to die on reaching the age of forty-five years' (Barrie 2018, p. 60).

It is patent in both of these texts that becoming a male adult over forty years of age, for Barrie, is a far from desirable thought. Allison Kavey and Lester D. Friedman's *Peter Pan in Popular Imagination* is broken down into nine critical essays on Barrie's *Peter Pan*, with psychoanalysis and Freud only being mentioned a handful of times throughout. In *The Case of Peter Pan*, by Jacqueline Rose, she utilises psychoanalytical theory in order to argue that in

this case, children's literature is not about what the child needs, it is rather, what the adult needs from the child. In the opening line of her introduction she states, 'Peter Pan offers us the child-for ever. It gives us the child, but it does not speak to the child' (Rose, 1984, p. 1). In this project, I will agree with Rose's viewpoint; however, I will focus on how the creation of *Peter Pan* and his other texts are not just indications of what adults require from the child, but more specifically, what J. M. Barrie needed at the time of its completion. By analysing his other work as a contextual framework for his most famous pieces, I hope it will allow a stronger and more grounded argument to be formed in favour of this.

The Freudian concept of repressed emotions will be discussed across this thesis. Blum describes psychoanalysis as 'the story of the adult's relationship with an internalised, repudiated, but nevertheless ceaselessly desired child – not the actual child the adult has been' (Blum 1995, p. 23). This, along with the development of the Freudian topographical model of mind is fundamental to this thesis, and how the study of the conscious, preconscious and unconscious is beneficial in the critique of Barrie's work. The conscious mind is where material is readily available to be accessed at any given time. The preconscious consists of memories that can be accessible to be pulled to the surface, and brought into the conscious mind if needed. The unconscious is the part of the mind that resides under the surface, where repressed and uncomfortable feelings, memories and desires are housed (Freud & Strachey 1989, pp. 4-5). Ordinarily, we are unaware of what lies in the subconscious; however, occasionally the contents of this part of the psyche can emerge to the surface through a slip of the tongue, which Freud called parapraxis, or even in dreams. It is because of this, that the study of Barrie's life in Chapter One is central to the progression, development and expansion of this analysis.

The complexity of the pleasure principal is explored within the development of Peter Pan's character, as Barrie discovers the ways in which Peter Pan can act on desires, with no

regard for others, and without experiencing any form of guilt. This example of the id in action, which controls the individual's instinctive needs, is directly contrasted with the presence of the ego and superego, which work together to repress the id's urges in a socially acceptable manner in other elder characters such as Wendy, who fulfils a parental role in The Neverland. Similarly, in *Better Dead*, the protagonist exhibits an id, which overpowers the ego and superego, by creating a drastic solution to a relatively minor issue. During Freud's studies, he noticed that his patients who had been through traumatic experiences had the tendency to repeat these stories, which was part of a self-destructive compulsion that was caused by the instinctual death drive. Peter repeats the whole journey once again in *When Wendy Grew Up,* as he shows Wendy's daughter Jane how to fly and follow him to The Neverland:

> 'She is my mother,' Peter explained; and Jane descended and stood by his side, with the look in her face that he liked to see on ladies when they gazed at him.
> 'He does so need a mother,' Jane said.
> 'Yes, I know.' Wendy admitted rather forlornly; 'no one knows it so well as I.' (Barrie 2012, p. 230)

These revised ideas of the human psyche by psychologists such as Erik Erikson, also have an importance in psychoanalytic theory. Erikson claimed that eternal circumstances and experiences have more of an impact on the development of the ego than Freud had originally suggested (Erikson 1994, p. 180). This theory is particularly important to explore in relation to Barrie, due to his difficult childhood. Another theory that was later questioned by theorists such as Erikson, was Freud's study of the development of one's personality. This addressed the five stages of psychosexual development; The Oral Stage – fixation with the mouth; The Anal Stage – fixation with the anus; The Phallic Stage – fixation with the penis or clitoris; The Latent Period – little to no sexual fixation; and The Genital Stage – fixation with the penis and vagina which leads to intercourse (Newman & Newman 2020, pp. 125-126).

The above studies included revisions to the notion of the Oedipus Complex which occurs in the third stage. Freud believed that in the phallic stage of psychosexual development, the male child experiences unconscious sexual attraction towards the parent of the opposite sex. Barrie always believed his brother David was the favourite child, and as previously mentioned, the completion of psychosexual development was denied to Barrie's brother when he died before reaching adulthood. Therefore, Freud's theory would suggest that David would never leave that phase. Barrie attempted to mimic the role his brother fulfilled, but it would never be the same, as Barrie would eventually grow up. Erikson's studies however, suggest that Barrie's constant discouragement and dismissal during this stage was a leading factor of confusion around his identity and purpose during his adult years.

Furthermore, one of the most ostensible psychoanalytical techniques utilised within the Barrie's works is the use of dreams. Freud based a vast amount of his psychoanalytic theories on the underlying meanings behind dreams, most of which appeared in his 1899 book, *The Interpretation of Dreams.* In this book, Freud claims that dreams are both the representation of repressed wishes, and the censorship of a socially unacceptable thoughts or desires, so it can be materialised in an acceptable manner. Dreams are a recurring theme in Barrie's work and are central to aspects of the plot of *Peter Pan*. With Freud claiming that dreams can be the occurrence of the contents of the subconscious emerging briefly into the conscious mind, the use of dream sequences in Barrie's texts can be indicative of his overflow of repressed memories. Therefore, in order to accurately critique his work, this project will focus on the presence and significance of dreams, why Freud believed that dreams were the royal road to the unconscious, and why I believe Barrie used the oneiric to address some of his own issues within his psyche.

Along with developing psychoanalytical theory, Freud also practiced therapy with various patients. One of his methodologies involved the act of allowing the patient to speak

freely without distraction, which he referred to as free association. Freud would then read out several words, prompting the patient to reply with the first answer that came to their mind. This allowed the patient to begin with a free flow of thoughts stemming from the conscious part of their psyche, then gradually, as they become more comfortable and deeper in thought, they began to access the unconscious part of the mind, and fragments of repressed feelings and emotions began to emerge during the therapy. Freud sat behind them, taking notes as they spoke; by the end of the session he would often be left with hints of both everyday events and life changing scenarios, all being addressed during that one single session. This drastic elevation from normal to abnormal thoughts can be seen quite frequently in *Peter Pan*:

> Peter spoke indignantly. 'You don't think I would kill him while he was sleeping! I would wake him first, and then kill him. That's the way I always do.'
> 'I say! Do you kill many?' 'Tons.'
> John said 'How ripping,' but decided to have tea first. (Barrie 2012, p. 57)

Thus, the composition of his novel can be seen as a form of psychoanalytical therapy for Barrie himself. Freud's custom of taking notes has also been a long-regarded form of therapy for people for centuries. In childhood, some children are gifted with diaries, some guarded with locks, and in more recent times, some with invisible ink so that only a special light can show what is hidden inside. Barrie's *The Little White Bird,* 1902 has undeniable autobiographical undertones throughout, from the adult protagonist befriending a child in Kensington Gardens, to his overwhelming urge to fulfil a parental role for the youngster. Once again, this novel is an example of Barrie's coping mechanisms, as he attempts a form of therapy through writing in his own diary, presented in the form of a fictional children's novel, 'the life of every man is a diary in which he means to write one story and writes another; and his humblest hour is when he compares the volume as it is with what he vowed to make it' (Barrie 2020, p. 4).

In both *The Little White Bird* and *Peter Pan,* examples of abreaction, as developed by

Sigmund Freud and Josef Breuer in *Studies on Hysteria*, can be seen when both David and Peter find themselves trapped on the outside, looking in longingly at a family scene filled with love and unity. This reoccurrence in both texts mimics the resurfacing of repressed grief that Barrie experienced as a child due to David's death. Freud and Breuer claim that the experience of abreaction can make the event seem so realistic that the patient feels like they are reliving it once again. Therefore, the repetition of this scene suggests the inner torment experienced by Barrie, as he battled to keep the anguish from coming to the surface on several occasions. By addressing these memories and putting them on paper, although disguised, he gave himself the opportunity to feel relief afterwards, a process which Freud referred to as catharsis:

> For we found, to our great surprise at first, that each individual hysterical symptom immediately and permanently disappeared when we had succeeded in bringing clearly to light the memory of the event by which it was provoked and in arousing its accompanying affect. (Breuer & Freud 1895, p. 6)

This method of treatment and therapeutic end result may be suggestive of why Barrie chose to describe every detail involved in the scenes in both of the novels.

The structure of this thesis will consist of an introduction, abstract, eight chapters and a conclusion. The eight chapters will be called as follows:

Chapter 1: J. M. Barrie: The Life and Influences Behind His Writing; Chapter 2:

The Quest for Individuality in a Conforming Society; Chapter 3: Dreams: A

Window to the Unconscious;

Chapter 4: Keep on Flying: Transporting the Mind, Body and Soul; Chapter 5:

The Role of Sexual Maturation in the Eternally Innocent;

Chapter 6: 'You Can't Catch Me and Make Me a Man': Gender and Binaries in Barrie's World of Fiction;

Chapter 7: 'To Die Will Be an Awfully Big Adventure': The Transcendence of Time in The

Neverland;

Chapter 8: ‘Betwixt-and-Between’: Fantasy and Reality.

Each of these eight chapters will analyse and critique aspects of the life and literature of J. M. Barrie, using psychoanalytical theory as a hermeneutic and theoretical lens. Chapter One will provide a clear insight into the kind of life Barrie lead, which is particularly significant in terms of the importance that psychoanalysis places on childhood. Chapter Two will discuss why the information examined in Chapter One becomes important in terms of the kind of adult Barrie became, and how it affected his ability to find his place in society. Chapter Three will develop the psychoanalytical theory of dreams in Barrie’s case, proving that suppressed emotions from his childhood can materialise while he sleeps. Chapter Four addresses the reoccurrence of flight in Barrie’s writing, deconstructing the meaning behind its emergence, in both oneiric scenes and real-life scenarios. Chapter Five develops the previous theory of flight and its connection to sexuality in the late nineteenth century, whilst also investigating the detrimental effect the incompletion of Freud’s five stages of sexual development can have on an adult. Chapter Six continues the analysis on sexuality, dissecting the role of gender and the presence of binaries in various aspects of his work.

All of these issues together, prove to weigh heavily on J. M. Barrie, which explains why the intriguing repetitive use of powerful words such as ‘die’, ‘death’ and ‘dying’, appears in many of his novels and plays, including a children’s novel. Thus, the occurrence of these terms and their significance to Barrie will be discussed in Chapter Seven. Finally, the last chapter will tie together previous chapters, and will illustrate the rapid shift between fantasy and reality throughout Barrie’s work, allowing the reader to gain an insight to the complex mind of the author of one of the most famous children’s novels ever to be written. These eight chapters will work congruently to form a cohesive, and correlative structure, framed by the introduction and conclusion, ultimately proving my thesis statement, that Barrie acknowledged

childhood innocence as a form of heightened consciousness. Furthermore, as J. M. Barrie wrote about Peter Pan and his adventures various times, and also adapted some for republication, I will include a brief timeline that traces the chronological order of his Peter Pan publications and the staging of his plays.

**Chronological Order of the Peter Pan Series:**

*The Little White Bird (novel) – 1902*

*Peter Pan or The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up* (play staged in London) – *1904 Peter Pan or The Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up* (play staged in America) – *1905*

*Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens* (chapter extractions taken from the novel *The Little White Bird) – 1906*

*When Wendy Grew Up, An Afterthought* (additional scene to the Peter Pan play) – *1908*

*Peter and Wendy (novel adaptation of Peter Pan play) – 1911*

*Peter Pan* first appears in film as a silent movie – *1924*

*Peter Pan* is made into an animated film and released by Disney – *1954*

**Chronological Order of Analysed Texts by Barrie:**

*Better Dead – 1887*

*Sentimental Tommy – 1896*

*Margaret Ogilvy - 1896*

*Tommy and Grizel – 1900*

*The Little White Bird - 1902*

*Peter Pan - 1911*

# Chapter 1 J. M. Barrie: Theoretical Framework: The Life and Inspiration Behind His Writing

'When I became a man he was still a boy of thirteen' (Barrie 2014, p. 12), is not only one of the most compelling lines of J. M Barrie's *Margaret Ogilvy*, a memoir devoted to his mother, but it is also a clear insight into the depths of the tragedy experienced by Barrie and his family. For the purpose of this thesis, and specifically through the use of a psychoanalytical approach, it is necessary to spend some time delving into J. M Barrie's youthful experiences; into the impact these had on his development as an adult and as a writer; and into the unconventional relationships he formed in adulthood that resulted from his short-lived childhood. Born in Kirriemuir in Scotland in 1860, during the Victorian period where Queen Victoria reigned from 1837-1901, social classes were prominent in society, with each family being confined to their specific place in the socioeconomic order, knowing exactly where they were required to live, socialise and how to represent themselves in accordance with societal and cultural expectations for each individual class division.

The higher class, or the aristocracy, consisted of the wealthiest and most successful people, most of whom were born into their powerful and well-respected families. People in this class were usually so wealthy that they did not need to go to work, and therefore, most of their time revolved around hosting lavish dinner parties in their extravagant and luxurious homes to their counterparts that were in attendance (Steinbach 2017, p. 21). The middle class consisted of the working individuals of society, and during the Industrial Revolution, a division between members of this class became clear when people moved to the city in search of more desirable job-prospects in factories, which resulted in some families having the ability to afford better educational opportunities. The upper middle class comprised of desired professions such as

doctors, lawyers and bankers, whilst the lower middle class was made up of lower-level skills:

> jobs such as craftsmen and small business owners (Steinbach 2017 p. 30). The lower class included individuals in society with low income and little to no prospects. Many of these people worked for families in the higher classes as cooks, childminders, cleaners and teachers, (Steinbach 2017, p. 272)

Barrie was one of nine children born into a middle-class family, his father was a successful weaver, and both Barrie and his siblings were encouraged to study to university level, a privilege many did not receive, as Birkin highlights, 'the dominant priority in the Barrie household was one of fierce educational ambition rather than a struggle for survival' (Birkin 2003, p. 28). However, Barrie had a keen interest in literature and storytelling from a young age and dismissed his parents' encouragement to join the ministry. They came to compromise on their strong views however, and Barrie agreed to attend college, but only if he could fulfil his wish to study literature. His notebook entries (Birkin 2003) tell the tale of the constant feelings of loneliness and discomfort that accompanied Barrie throughout his stay in college, and in 1882 he graduated with a Master's degree, despite the duration of the course becoming one of the unhappiest periods in his lifetime. Furthermore, his stint in college perhaps inspired the composition of his satirical, pessimistic novel *Better Dead*, published in 1887, a novel Nash claims 'has never been much admired, least of all by its author who in his maturity was known to suggest that its claim to posterity – or lack of it – was answered by its title' (Nash 2015, p. 19). This suggests that although independent, he still experienced the underlying pressure of societal and parental expectations and judgement, as he continued to satisfy their wishes, despite the detrimental consequences it caused to his own well-being:

> From the day on which I first tasted blood in the garret my mind was made up; there could be no hum-dreadful-drum profession for me; literature was my game. It was not

> highly thought of by those who wished me well. I remember being asked by two maiden ladies, about the time I left the university, what I was to be, and when I replied brazenly, 'An author,' they flung up their hands, and one exclaimed reproachfully, 'And you an M.A.!' My mother's views at first were not dissimilar; for long she took mine jestingly as something I would grow out of, and afterwards they hurt her so that I tried to give them up. To be a minister—that she thought was among the fairest prospects, but she was a very ambitious woman, and sometimes she would add, half scared at her appetite, that there were ministers who had become professors, 'but it was not canny to think of such things'. (Barrie 2014, p. 17)

Whilst the above quote shows a clear understanding on Barrie's behalf that those around him hoped for the best for him, he quickly realised the best path for someone to follow does not always offer financial security. Whilst becoming a minister would provide him with a solid career with financial protection, none of that would take from the mental turmoil of turning his back on literature, something he referred to as his 'game' (Barrie 2014, p. 17), alluding to a life of fun and happiness.

Barrie was part of a large family, he was the ninth child of ten, two of whom passed away years before Barrie was born including David who was the sixth child in the family. He proved himself to be quite the storyteller from a young age, drawing attention to himself with his enchanting personality which perhaps compensated for the fact that he was always of a smaller stature, growing to just 5 foot 3 inches tall in adulthood (Moffat 2012, p. 166). At the age of six, as already explained, Barrie experienced a pivotal traumatic event in his childhood when his brother David was involved in an ice-skating accident and passed away the day before his fourteenth birthday. This tragedy initiated the beginning of a whirlwind of emotions for Barrie at such a young age; the loss of his brother, the realisation that David was his mother's favourite and that nothing and no individual would ever come close to replacing the love she held for him, and consequently, the loss of his mother as he knew her. To compensate

for this, Barrie began mimicking his brother, dressing like him, whistling like him and speaking like him, in the hopes he could fill the hole left behind by David's death. In his memoir, he describes a moment when his mother even believes she is speaking to the deceased boy, to which Barrie tragically replies, 'no, it's no him, it's just me' (Barrie 2014, p. 5). The word 'just' here depicts a sense of defeat, as Barrie realises that his attempts at filling the void left behind by David will always fall short.

This sense of defeat continues, as he devotes pages of the memoir to detailing the lengths he went to in order to drag his mother out of the deep state of depression in which she found herself. His brother, taken before he had the chance to lose his innocence, and his mother's preoccupation with her child who would never grow up, became the first example of the inspiration for Peter Pan's character. However, Barrie himself also lost his innocence the day his brother passed, becoming a carer for his mother overnight, leaving his own grief on the side-line in order to ensure someone else's was under control:

> I kept a record of her laughs on a piece of paper, a stroke for each, and it was my custom to show this proudly to the doctor every morning. There were five strokes the first time I slipped it into his hand, and when their meaning was explained to him he laughed so boisterously, that I cried, 'I wish that was one of hers!' Then he was sympathetic, and asked me if my mother had seen the paper yet, and when I shook my head he said that if I showed it to her now and told her that these were her five laughs he thought that I might win another. (Barrie 2014, p. 5)

In the memoir, Barrie details how he kept count of every laugh his mother made between doctors' visits, but tragically, the total could be counted on one hand. He goes on to discuss his ongoing worries regarding her health in detail, and how his concern for her health deterred him from leaving home many times:

> The morning came when I was to go away. It had come a hundred times, when I was a

> boy, when I was an undergraduate, when I was a man, when she had seemed big and strong to me, when she was grown so little and it was I who put my arms round her. (Barrie 2014, p. 73)

As their mother's health deteriorated, his sister Jane Ann devoted her time to taking care of Margaret Ogilvy, whilst Barrie was in the midst of writing and editing *Margaret Ogilvy* and *Sentimental Tommy.* He decided it was time to travel, and he went to Switzerland with his wife Mary Ansell to celebrate their wedding anniversary; however, they only resided for a fortnight, due to an unexpected and abrupt telegram informing him that Jane Ann had passed away suddenly.

In his memoir, he mentions the apprehension he experienced at being such a long distance away from his family, whilst having no idea how his frail, elderly mother was coping with the death of, not only her daughter, but also her full-time care giver:

> I had been gone a fortnight when the telegram was put into my hands. I had got a letter from my sister, a few hours before, saying that all was well at home. The telegram said in five words that she had died suddenly the previous night. There was no mention of my mother, and I was three days journey from home. The news I got on reaching London was this: my mother did not understand that her daughter was dead, and they were waiting for me to tell her. (Barrie 2014, p. 88)

However, the grief did not end there for Barrie, as when he returned home, he discovered he was twelve hours too late to have the opportunity to see his mother alive. From childhood, he repeatedly put his mother's life and potential happiness in front of his own, and when he decided to follow his own dreams, tragedy struck, and he lost two family members in the space of three days. Letters sent from Barrie describe how he felt content and proud of all he had done for his mother, yet guilty for the life his sister had missed out on by giving up her freedom in order to mind their mother. Even in her last hours, Barrie describes his mother's recurring grief from the death of David, as she wandered around the room asking 'is that you, David?' (Barrie 2014, 89), showing the impact this immeasurably traumatic experience had on her

mental health and consequently, on Barrie's too.

The obsession maintained by his mother for the boy who would never grow up, and his urge to fill the role of that brother, became a recurring theme throughout Barrie's life, as he initiated and maintained many friendships with children all the way through his adulthood. Margaret Emma Henley, born in 1888, daughter to the famous English poet William Ernest Henley, became a close friend of Barrie's. Due to her young age and illness caused by cerebral meningitis, she could not pronounce her words correctly, and so, referred to Barrie as 'fwendy-wendy' (Flora 1970, p. 16). Margaret passed away aged 5, but was immortalised by Barrie, as she became the inspiration for Wendy Darling in his play *Peter Pan,* and the subsequent novels that followed. Thus, yet again, someone that Barrie loved dearly died before far before their time, proving that the several tragedies in his life established the motivation for his most renowned and successful pieces of writing to date.

As he became more and more successful, Barrie was regarded as a famous figure, and was invited to the homes of many well-respected and well-known people to entertain and engage with their children. One of the most interesting of these encounters occurred in 1933 whilst at a tea party for one of his many young friends. The Duke and Duchess of York arrived at the party with their two children, princess Margaret and Princess Elizabeth – the recent Queen of the United Kingdom (Dudgeon 2016, 288). He struck up an immediate bond with Princess Margaret, which resulted in further invites to Glamis Castle to play with the children. At a party for Princess Margaret's birthday, Barrie passed a remark on her presents, asking if they were all hers, to which she replied, 'it is yours and mine'. Barrie was in awe of the generosity and kindness shown by her, a child. She later stated in relation to Barrie, 'I know that man. He is my greatest friend, and I am his greatest friend' (Dudgeon 2016, p. 289). Barrie was so inspired by Princess Margaret, he used both of her statements in his final play *The Boy David,* and told her that he would pay her one penny for every time her words were spoken on

stage. Once again, Barrie was reminded of the striking contrast between a wholesome child and a greed-driven adult, as he received a letter from Princess Margaret's father, King George VI, claiming that if he did not fulfil his side of the agreement and pay what is owed to Margaret, he would hear from His Majesty's advocates.

A boy born into a middle-class family, and subsequently brushing shoulders with royalty would normally be possible only in the realms of fantasy; however, Barrie was more impacted by the obliviousness and innocence of a young child, born into a life of wealth, riches and extravagance, yet who was grounded and non-judgemental. He ultimately looked at every fortunate encounter as a window of opportunity to gain inspiration for his writing:

> For the weaver's son from Kirriemuir this latter-day conjugation with royalty must have seemed a climax of sorts. But it is also instructive because, as in the case of the Llewelyn Davies boys and like most writers, life was for him the ground of his art and he lived life principally for his work, living it to invigorate and inspire his plays and novels. Theory was no good to him at all. (Dudgeon 2016, pp. 290-291)

Therefore, even before one would look into the more familiar and renowned relationships Barrie had with children, it becomes apparent that he repeatedly found himself elated, blissful and giddy whilst in their company, thus, becoming almost child-like himself, reaching a state of consciousness that was unfamiliar to his adult-self, yet familiar to the child within him that longed to be innocent and carefree once again.

The drive behind the composition of *Peter Pan* did not solely stem from the prominence of death in his life. As already noted, Barrie met the three Llewelyn Davies boys, George, Jack and Peter, in Kensington Gardens in 1897, when he was in his late thirties (Michael and Nicholas were not yet born). Barrie had a Saint Bernard dog named Porthos, perhaps named after one of the characters in *The Three Musketeers*, who, standing alongside a man of Barrie's height, was bound to draw attention. This meeting was the beginning of Barrie's life as most

people know him – the author of *Peter Pan*. Although the character Peter Pan was named after Peter Davies, Barrie claimed that the story was made up of an equal portion of each of the boys' characteristics, traits and charms. In a dedication to the boys, Barrie says, 'as for myself, I suppose I always knew that I made Peter by rubbing the five of you violently together, as savages with two sticks produce a flame. That is all he is, the spark I got from you' (Barrie 2014, p. xv). Just like the spark that created *Peter Pan*, the sparks that flew between Barrie and the family were embers that would ignite and illuminate his entire existence from that moment on. Barrie entertained the boys by telling them tales, dancing with his oversized dog and playing games, creating a relationship built on fun, laughter and ultimately, on innocence (Birkin 2003, p. 85).

One relationship Barrie emphasised in particular in one of his notebooks, was the strong bond he shared with George, carefully describing George's *whimsicalities*, his illustrative interactions with Barrie, and even the pleasure it gave him when George requested Barrie to perform a simple task like tying his shoelace (Birkin 2003, p. 131). By bonding with the boys, and by providing emotional and financial support when needed, he took a paternal role in their lives, without having to chastise, reprimand or discipline them, thus, eliminating any conflict that is typically involved in a father-son relationship. This meant that if Barrie was indeed reliving his childhood through the Llewelyn Davies boys, the experience would be one of pleasure, happiness and above all, worry-free, all of which can be lost in adulthood amongst the stresses and anxieties of life. This yearning for becoming the father-figure without experiencing the difficulties of correcting a child, can be likened to the role of an aunt or uncle in a family setting, which perhaps gave way to the nickname the Llewelyn Davies boys referred to Barrie as, calling him 'Uncle Jim' (Birkin 2003, p. 270).

The same desire for parenthood without the difficulties involved with actually raising a child, can be seen in Barrie's writing. In *The Little White Bird*, his desire for parenthood is

depicted through the narrator, who though childless himself, strikes up a relationship with a child from a family in his neighbourhood, whilst financially supporting the parents. The narrator, Captain W, along with the boy named David, whose name was inspired by David Davies and whose personality was based on George Davies, partake in many adventures in Kensington Gardens and surrounding areas, presenting an undeniable autobiographical tone throughout the novel. The opening line of the novel begins with the statement 'sometimes the little boy who calls me father brings me an invitation from his mother' (Barrie 1930, p. 5). Immediately, he uses this opportunity where the reader's interest is at its peak, to describe his relationship with David, showing the audience that Captain W and David have a bond so close that the child is comfortable enough to refer to him as his father. He continues to repeatedly highlight this, with almost every quote from David including his use of the title.

The protagonist then describes how it feels to be mistaken as David's father in everyday scenarios, commonly using the term 'pleasure' to depict the impact the relationship has had on him:

> I like to hear him say it before others, as in shops. When in shops he asks the salesman how much money he makes in a day, and which drawer he keeps it in, and why his hair is red, and does he like Achilles, of whom David has lately heard, and is so enamoured that he wants to die to meet him. At such times the shopkeepers accept me as his father, and I cannot explain the peculiar pleasure this gives me. I am always in two minds then, to linger that we may have more of it, and to snatch him away before he volunteers the information, 'He is not really my father'. (Barrie 1930, p. 5)

In this novel, Barrie's, or rather, Captain W's, desire for parenthood is so profound, that it takes a disturbing turn, as the narrator pretends he has a son in order to bond with David's parents, and subsequently when the lie runs its course, he explains that he has died, and he gifts them with children's clothes that he no longer needs because of this. Here, the extremity of Barrie's

wishes, and the way in which they are dealt with resemble those of a mentally unstable person, which Freudian theory would suggest stems from an interrupted development cycle in childhood. Consequently, through his composition of this novel, he perhaps gets lost in his thoughts, and his desires that emerged from the id, which would normally be filtered by the ego, slip through and bubble over the surface in a stream of subconscious style of writing. During a conversation with a young woman who had a tendency to misquote poems by John Keats, Freud discovered that her version of the poem revealed an insight into the unbearable trauma she once experienced, 'the episode could not come to the surface because it was determined by very disagreeable and painful thoughts, but the unconscious variations in the poem plainly showed her present mental state' (Freud & Brill 1938, p.19).

Interestingly, Barrie's own father, David Barrie, is noticeably absent in his writings, as he fails to go into any depth of character description about him in any of his notebooks, novels or memoirs. In the late 1800s, it was conventional for the man of the house to be less active in the role of raising the children, and it was also common practice for them to be the punitive parent, strictly setting household rules and ensuring that they were followed. The lengths they went to in order to ensure these rules were followed was entirely up to their own discretion. Barrie was clearly a strong-minded individual, capable of making his own decisions and following through with them. Therefore, it is important to note that David Senior's absenteeism in Barrie's memoir is not necessarily depicting his father in a negative light. In *Margaret Ogilvy*, the memoir devoted to his mother in which his father is mentioned sparsely, Barrie describes his father as 'the silent figure in the background, always in the background, always near my mother,' and also claims 'it was at the time of my mother's marriage to one who proved a most loving as he was always a well-loved husband, a man I am very proud to be able to call my father' (Barrie 2014, p. 11), which provides enough assurance to make the assumption that although he may not have been a major influence on Barrie's life and development, he was a

worthy husband and father all the same. Thus, it can be concluded that the societal expectations in the late 1800s regarding the role of a father in a domestic setting became a burden to Barrie and proved to be an issue to which he tried to find a resolution by representing adult males in literature with non-binary personality traits.

For the purpose of this thesis, it is essential to scrutinise Barrie's relationships in order to determine when he felt at his happiest. Furthermore, the impact these connections have on the human psyche are indicative of the heightened consciousness Barrie attempts to achieve by surrounding himself with children. Therefore, I will now take some time to analyse the most important bond maintained by Barrie in his adult life. In the Llewelyn Davies family, Barrie found everything he ever desired: a loving and caring mother who was part of a complete family with five wholesome, innocent boys to cherish. However, his focus was primarily on bonding with the boys, as opposed to forming connections with the adults of the family. The relationship shared by Barrie and the Llewelyn Davies children, as mentioned previously in the introduction, is one that was scrutinised by critics since his death. It is important to take into context the facts surrounding the relationships; none of the adults who were part of the lives of the children Barrie befriended had any mistrust or suspicions regarding his intentions.

Barrie and the Llewelyn Davies boys' father, Arthur, did not share the same bond as Barrie and Sylvia held. It seemed Arthur was aware that he posed no threat to his marriage to Sylvia, and he evidently did not suspect Barrie of foul play with his children, feeling that he was 'quite harmless' (Birkin 2003, 139). The problem stemmed from the role Barrie played as a father figure to the children, perhaps stirring up emotions of insecurity and jealousy in Arthur, which did not go unnoticed by the children. Peter Llewellyn Davies wrote in a letter to Mary Hodgson in 1948, 'it is clear enough that father didn't like him, at any rate in the early stages. Did J. M. B.'s entry into the scheme of things occasionally cause ill-feeling or quarrelling's between mother and father?' (Birkin 2003, p. 155). All of this, along with Nicholas' constant

reassurance that Barrie was nothing other than a mentor and guardian to him and his brothers, means that this thesis will not encourage claims that Barrie was guilty of any wrongdoings. Nicholas, better known as Nico, was Barrie's chief admirer out of the five boys. The youngest of the five brothers, he lived the longest, providing authors such as Andrew Birkin with anecdotes, quotes and narratives about Barrie and about the type of person he was. However, not all of the boys had the same enthusiasm about Barrie's influence on their lives, and Barrie soon came to the realisation that even becoming only a father-figure and not a father would still result in some form of heartache along the way. The boys were children of Arthur and Sylvia Llewelyn Davies, Arthur was a relatively successful barrister, while Sylvia was the daughter of writer and cartoonist George du Maurier. They met in 1889, and Arthur proposed soon after, getting married in 1892. In 1891, the couple stayed at their friend Sir Hubert Parry's house, where Parry's teenage daughter, Dolly, recorded an extremely descriptive and indicative piece on Arthur and Sylvia Llewelyn Davies:

> We have never seen such a pair of undemonstrative lovers as Sylvia and Arthur. They hardly ever speak to each other even when in a room by themselves. Sylvia is a delightful thing. I can't imagine her with Margaret [Llewelyn Davies] at all, with her love of pretty dresses and the stage; she is always dancing about the room. … Without being strictly speaking pretty, she has got one of the most delightful, brilliantly sparkling faces I have ever seen. Her nose turns round the corner—also turns right up. Her mouth is quite crooked … Her eyes are very pretty—hazel and very mischievous. She has pretty black fluffy hair: but her expression is what gives her that wonderful charm, and her low voice. (Birkin 2003, p. 118)

The couple went on to have their first child in 1893 who they named George. John, also known as Jack, came along after a year in 1894, followed by Peter in 1897, Michael in 1900 and Nico in 1903 (Birkin 2003, pp. 120-205). Sylvia regularly took the children on walks to Kensington Gardens, where they became acquainted with Barrie, who also visited Kensington Gardens

with his wife Mary Ansell and his dog Porthos. After an engagement at a dinner party, Barrie and Sylvia became good friends, which turned out to be the beginning of Barrie playing a monumental role in the lives of the Llewelyn Davies boys.

From the outset, Arthur was significantly uneasy regarding the constant presence of Barrie in their home, as he accompanied the family on day trips and even on family holidays. Arthur did not however, act upon this, suggesting his discomfort stemmed from some form of inferiority complex, as he knew Barrie was adopting the role of a father figure in the boys' lives. Barrie had the time and funds to be in their lives on a regular basis, whilst Arthur had to continue his role as the provider of the household, spending a vast amount of time committing to work related engagements (Birkin 2003 p.154), meaning he was away whilst Barrie enjoyed quality time with his family. However, in 1906, Arthur Llewelyn Davies was about to realise just how valuable Barrie's friendship would be, when he found a lump on his cheek that turned out to be a sarcoma, an aggressive form of cancer (Birkin 2003, p. 381). During this turbulent event in the lives of the Llewelyn Davies family, Barrie was in the middle of a crisis of his own, as his personal agent, Arthur Addison Bright, under the pressure of accusations regarding misappropriation of thousands of pounds belonging to his clients, committed suicide in Switzerland, yet he found a way to ensure he could help the family emotionally and financially.

Yet again, another person Barrie cared for met a tragic end, and again, Barrie put aside his own grief and emotions in order to look after someone else, immediately seeing to the Llewelyn Davies family in their time of need. He took sole responsibility for all the medical costs securing the finest treatment possible, paying bills amounting to thousands of pounds due to the complex surgery needed to remove some of Arthur's jaw and mouth. He wrote to family and friends of Arthur's to inform them of the unfortunate circumstances, and he resided in the hospital room and waiting room, answering to every command and request they had (Birkin

2003, p. 291). Letters written by different members of the family described the impact Barrie's actions had on their lives, including a letter which Arthur wrote to his father, which described Barrie as a brother to him, depicting the depth of love and admiration that formed between two men, during one of the toughest times the couple would endure together. As time progressed, Arthur went from referring to Barrie as 'Sylvia's friend' to 'Jimmy', whilst Sylvia described him as 'our fairy prince, much the best fairy prince that was ever born because he is real' (Dudgeon 2016, p. 88). Thus, despite the initial fragmented relationship between the pair that caused Peter Llewelyn Davies to claim his father 'didn't like him' (Birkin 2003, p. 155), Barrie exhibited the full extent of his compassionate nature, as he set all differences aside in an attempt to save the life of someone who was extremely important to his dear friends, Sylvia and the boys. Therefore, helping others became one of Barrie's favourite things to do, exampling his kind and generous nature not only with money but also with his time.

Whilst the connections Barrie made and maintained with other people in his life played a major part in his character development, it can also be assumed his achievement of a Masters of Arts Degree from Edinburgh University meant he was well educated and most likely aware of the ground-breaking work and theories being developed by other scholars during the late 1800s and early 1900s. One of the most influential theorists of that time, was Sigmund Freud, born in Austria on May 6$^{th}$, 1856, almost exactly four years previous to Barrie's date of birth. Freud founded psychoanalysis, which is 'based on the idea that neurotic and maladaptive behaviour is based on emotional and instinctive energies that become repressed in the patients' unconscious' (James 2005, p. 141). Freud has proposed many theories which tackle and expand the misunderstanding and complexities of the invisibility of the mind, paying particular interest to the unconscious mind, that resides under the surface, accumulating and saving memories and feelings that have been repressed by our conscious mind. As it has been shown, in Barrie's life, trauma and grief continued to follow him into adulthood, so in order to learn more about

the operations of his mind, and about how this affected his writing and can thus be seen in his work, Freudian theory will be used to offer new understandings of Barrie as both a man and as a writer.

Freud first began his psychoanalytical investigations in 1893, publishing his first book based on the concept in 1895, which was named *Studies on Hysteria*, co-written by Josef Breuer. It was in this book, that Freud and Breuer initiated a deep discussion on the medical case of hysteria, a term which covered a broad range of mental illnesses, and the impact trauma has on one's mind. They proposed that the event that caused the hysteria in a patient, was located somewhere deep in the mind, in the unconscious, and the key to curing the illness was to bring the traumatic experience to the forefront, to the conscious part of one's mind (Freud & Breuer 1893-1895, pp. 3-5). The two theorists experimented with patients and concluded that by bringing the event out of the unconscious and into the conscious mind through hypnosis and free association, the patient was freed of all symptoms that were associated with the condition. Through hypnosis, the patient was free to speak uninterrupted, whilst the doctor took notes and analysed their findings:

> As a rule, it is necessary to hypnotize the patient and to arouse his memories under hypnosis of the time at which the symptom made its first appearance; when this has been done, it becomes possible to demonstrate the connection in the clearest and most convincing fashion. (Freud & Breuer 1893-1895, 41)

This gave them an insight into what was simmering under the surface of the mind, waiting for its opportunity to emerge.

Freud and Breuer claim that in most instances, several lesser traumatic experiences can make more of an impact on a person than one large one, which is especially significant in Barrie's case:

> Every experience which produces the painful effect of fear, anxiety, shame or of psychic pain may act as a psychic trauma. Whether an experience becomes of traumatic importance naturally depends on the person affected as well on the determination to be mentioned later. In ordinary hysteria instead of one big trauma we not seldom find many partial traumas, grouped causes which can be of traumatic significance only when summarized and which belong together in so far as they form small fragments of the sorrowful tale. (Freud 2017, p. 20)

Freud's reference here to grouped cases of trauma can be related to an individual such as Barrie who suffered so many tragic losses in short spaces of time. As psychoanalytical theories developed, Freud and Breuer differed in opinion, however, this book instigated a turning point in psychology, becoming the initial reference for psychoanalysis as we know it, initiating the beginning of numerous in-depth studies of the unconscious mind. All of these developments were happening whilst Barrie was drafting and composing novels that proved to have a strong intuitive grasp of psychoanalysis, therapeutically representing his situation in life through the use of fiction, with the main characters of stories such as *The Little White Bird* and *Better Dead* being described as 'thinly disguised' fictional avatars of Barrie himself (Birkin 2003, p. 132).

Freud hypothetically categorised human personalities into three parts; the id, the ego and the superego. The id is the only one of the three that we are born with – it is responsible for our drives and instincts and acts upon the urges of the pleasure principle, a drive that is embedded in the human race to achieve immediate satisfaction, and to fulfil needs from basic requirements such as eating and drinking, to secondary wishes such as sexual gratification:

> In the theory of psycho-analysis we have no hesitation in assuming that the course taken by mental events is automatically regulated by the pleasure principle. We believe, that is to say, that the course of those events is invariably set in motion by an unpleasurable tension, and that it takes a direction such that its final outcome coincides with a lowering of that tension-that is, with an avoidance of unpleasure or a production of pleasure. (Freud & Strachey 1961, p. 1)

In order to address and develop the complexity of theories such as the pleasure principal, Freud posited two further drives: Eros, which helps the individual to live and survive, 'the preserver of all things, and of deriving the narcissistic libido of the ego from the stores of libido by means of which the cells of the soma are attached to one another' (Freud & Strachey 1961, p. 46), and Thanatos, which comprises of damaging instincts that point the individual towards self-destruction, 'it also emerges as a predominant component instinct in one of the 'pregenital organizations' … whose aim it is to injure the object' (Freud & Strachey 1961, p. 48). The ego acts upon the reality principle, taking into account all the urges and drives of the id, and incorporating it into daily life, ensuring that the satisfaction can be achieved and executed in a socially acceptable manner. Freud claimed that a person who acted upon their sexual urges immediately without hesitation was a self-indulgent narcissist who did not maintain any form of social existence (Neu 2008, p. 277).

> By studying the libidinal development of children in its earliest phases, came to the conclusion that the ego is the true and original reservoir of libido and that it is only from that reservoir that libido is extended on to objects. The ego now found its position among sexual objects and was at once given the foremost place among them. Libido which was in this way lodged in the ego was described as 'narcissistic'. (Freud & Strachey 1961, p. 46)

This self-indulgent personality trait was described by Rees as 'a state of perfect self-absorption, an early stage of infantile development during which the other does not (yet) exist' (Rees 2020, p. 2), depicting a sense of childhood immaturity that allows the individual to thrive purely on a selfish basis, knowing their decision making revolves solely on the impact it will have on themselves and no one else.

Of course this narcissistic way of life could not allow humanity to co-exist due to the lack of morality. The super-ego is the internal drive for perfection, where social concepts are

understood and applied to daily life, ensuring a moral compass is present in decision-making. The id and the super-ego act as opposing influences, with the ego coming into action in order to compromise and allow some leniency either way when necessary. At all stages, a human instinct or urge that comes from one of the sections of the tripartite psychic apparatus, will be incompatible with the other two parts of the personality, which will cause an internal conflict:

> In the course of things it happens again and again that individual instincts or parts of instincts turn out to be incompatible in their aims or demands with the remaining ones, which are able to combine into the inclusive unity of the ego. The former are then split off from this unity by the process of repression, held back at lower levels of psychical development and cut off, to begin with, from the possibility of satisfaction. (Freud & Strachey 1961, p. 5)

The more this occurs, it can cause overwhelming feelings of anxiety and consequently, depression. Therefore, collectively, the three parts of the psychic apparatus are responsible for each individual human's behaviour and thus, form a foundation for the more in-depth cognitive concepts proposed by Freud. This model forms the basis of many of Freud's theories and will be referred to throughout this thesis.

Using these three compartments of the mind, Freud constructed two topographical structures; the first equated the mind to an iceberg; the ego, which resides above the surface, the superego, which makes up the mid-section with some of its content reaching the surface, and the id which is completely submerged under the water level. The second structure is made of the conscious, the preconscious and the unconscious mind, again resembling an iceberg; the conscious represents the visible section of ice above water, the subconscious signifies the section at the water level that is underwater when the sea-level rises, and visible when it descends, and the unconscious portrays the enormous section that resides deep under the water and is not visible. Freud believed that the most critical and powerful part of the mind, just like

an iceberg, is the part one cannot see; therefore, the unconscious became the subject of most of his theories. Traumatic experiences can cause immeasurable pain and anxiety for someone. In order to cope, these feelings, if not dealt with at the time, are supressed, pushing them down and into the unconscious, which Freud would refer to as repression. He claimed that although the contents of the unconscious are hidden beneath the surface, they still have a consequential negative impact on how we behave as adults:

> The symptom is the substitute for that which did not take place. Now we know where the forces whose existence we suspect must operate. Some violent antagonism must have been aroused to prevent the psychic process in question from reaching consciousness, and it therefore remained unconscious. As an unconscious thought it had the power to create a symptom. The same struggle during the analytic treatment opposes anew the efforts to carry this unconscious thought over into consciousness. This process we felt as a resistance. That pathogenic process which is made evident to us through the resistance, we will name repression. (Freud 2020, p. 210)

Therefore, through therapy and psychoanalysis, he aimed to bring the subdued emotions to the surface, making the unconscious, conscious, in order to rectify the problems caused by the repressed feelings.

As previously stated, Freud believed several grouped traumas can create significant impact on a person's mental well-being, and Barrie would have been a telling example of an individual burdened by multiple painful and distressing events in his lifetime. The process of repressing feelings resulting from the sudden deaths surrounding Barrie from his childhood to right through his adulthood, contributed to the dismissive approach towards death in his novels such as *Peter Pan*, as he repressed feelings of loss and dread as a way of protecting himself from the frightening actuality of the event:

> 'There's a pirate asleep in the pampas just beneath us,' Peter told him. 'If you like,

> we'll go down and kill him.'
> 'I don't see him,' John said after a long pause. 'I do.'
> 'Suppose,' John said, a little huskily, 'he were to wake up.'
> Peter spoke indignantly. 'You don't think I would kill him while he was sleeping! I would wake him first, and then kill him. That's the way I always do.'
> 'I say! Do you kill many?' 'Tons.'
> John said 'How ripping,' but decided to have tea first. (Barrie 2012, p. 57)

The above quote that was referred to in my introduction, is taken from *Peter Pan,* and shows a conversation between Peter and John, where Peter flippantly speaks about murder, questioning John's morals regarding killing the pirate as he sleeps, yet also claiming that he kills 'tons' of pirates without a second thought. The dialogue shows the moral compass of the minds of children, going from discussing murder to drinking tea in a matter of seconds, showing the extent of guilt experienced by the two children.

One of Freud's most renowned theories, is his development of the psychosexual stages during childhood: oral, anal, phallic, latent and genital. These five stages are driven by the pleasure principle, an urge that is instinctive in children, where it is more socially acceptable for the urge to be fulfilled immediately than it is as we grow older. This urge, according to Freud, is a 'method of working employed by the sexual instincts, which are so hard to 'educate', and, starting from those instincts, or in the ego itself, it often succeeds in overcoming the reality principle, to the detriment of the organism' (Freud & Strachey 1961, p. 4). The oral stage is the stage a baby is born into and occurs up until one year of age. The fixation held here by the baby consists of activities that allow pleasure to be experienced by the mouth, through sucking the mother's breast and biting various objects:

> It was the child's first and most vital activity, the sucking at the mother's breast, or at substitutes for it, that must have previously familiarized it with this pleasure. The child's lips, in our view, behaved like an erogenous zone; presumably the stimulation

> by the warm flow of milk was the cause of the pleasurable sensation. The satisfaction of the erogenous zone was probably associated, in the first instance, with the satisfaction of the need for nourishment. (Freud 2017, p. 8)

The baby then moves onto the anal stage which takes place up until the age of three. Here, the baby starts to learn about control, by both resisting and succumbing to the urge to defecate, whilst also being taught by a parent the difference between right and wrong during potty training. Next, the child moves into the phallic stage until the age of six years old. The complex developed here is with the genital area, specifically the penis, with Freud claiming that boys become obsessed with their own penis, while girls wish they had one. Then comes a period of dormancy in the latency stage, where the child loses all sexual interest and develops social skills, which lasts up until they hit puberty:

> During the oral stage of organization of the libido, the act of obtaining erotic mastery over an object coincides with that object's destruction; later, the sadistic instinct separates off, and finally, at the stage of genital primacy, it takes on, for the purposes of reproduction, the function of overpowering the sexual object to the extent necessary for carrying out the sexual act. (Freud & Strachey 1961, p. 48)

Thus, when the genital stage begins, the teenagers start to develop strong sexual feelings, including the urge to have sexual intercourse (Freud 2017, p. 50). The ability to move onto the next stage is dependent on the success of manoeuvring through the previous stage, allowing the reality principle to slowly develop in order for the child to develop into a social being. The interruption, or incompletion of a specific stage can result in a fixation with that particular stage, and thus, have an immense impact on the type of person a child becomes in adulthood, 'every pathological disorder of sexual life is rightly to be regarded as an inhibition in development' (Neu 2008, p. 185).

This is particularly interesting with regard to the controversy that surrounded Barrie

and his alleged unconsummated marriage to Mary Ansell, which may be indicative of a fixation during the latency stage, resulting in his assumed asexuality in adulthood. As has been noted, Barrie was just six years of age when his brother died suddenly, and by taking it upon himself to put his mother's mental wellbeing ahead of his own at such a young age, Barrie lost part of himself and missed developmental milestones in the process; thus, according to Freud's theories, he failed to progress through the latency stage successfully. In his memoir devoted to his mother, *Margaret Ogilvy*, the first few pages descriptively portray a harrowing scene set in Barrie's mother's bedroom after her son David's death, where his sole purpose at that very moment was to entertain his heartbroken mother, when at that young age, the extent of his worries should have been concerning how to entertain himself and his friends:

> I have been told that my anxiety to brighten her gave my face a strained look and put a tremor into the joke (I would stand on my head in the bed, my feet against the wall, and then cry excitedly, 'Are you laughing, mother?') – and perhaps what made her laugh was something I was unconscious of, but she did laugh suddenly now and then, whereupon I screamed exultantly to that dear sister, who was ever in waiting, to come and see the sight, but by the time she came the soft face was wet again. Thus I was deprived of some of my glory, and I remember once only making her laugh before witnesses. (Barrie 2014, p. 5)

His admittance to the deprivation of his own glory initiated a time when his glory should have been the mass of his worries. Furthermore, his enthusiasm as an adult to initiate and maintain friendships with children can be traced back to the developmental failure encountered during this stage. As sexual feelings are set aside in order to become a more interactive social individual during the latency period, Barrie missed the opportunity that other children his age had at the time, to learn the social norms in relation to daily interactions with others, as well as experience in creating and maintaining friendships with no other distractions.

Another theory of Freud's regarding the effects of repressed thoughts and feelings on the

human psyche involved the occurrence of dreams. He performed an in-depth study of dreams and the significance of the events that take place in our minds once we fall asleep. In The Interpretation of Dreams, dreams are recognised as the fulfilment of an unmaterialized wish. The book explains how when one dreams, one experiences two types of content within the dream: manifest content and latent content (Freud 2010, p. 160). Manifest content refers to the events of the dream that occur and are remembered when one awakens and can 'conceal the true interpretation of the dream' (Freud 2010, p. 165). On its own, the manifest content is nothing more than the random thought process of the mind, merging familiarity with abnormality to form a collection of the most unlikely adventures. Freud described the latent content as 'thoughts which are shown by the work of interpretation to lie behind dreams' (Freud 2010, p. 160). It consists of the meaning behind the events of the dream, which is unrecognisable to the individual, 'every dream was linked in its manifest content with recent experiences and in its latent content with the most ancient experiences' (Freud 2010, p. 242). It is only by taking both into account and allowing them to work congruently, along with the help of a therapist, that the dream analysis can begin in order to discover the significance behind each dream. Freud based his theory on some of his own vibrant and animated dreams, taking notes on each dream as he remembered it, recording the manifest content in order to later draft the latent content.

It was in his own dream that occurred on the 23rd of July 1895, which was in relation to a patient of his named Irma, that Freud concluded that the oneiric is a manifestation of a wish fulfilment, 'thus it was her wish that I might be wrong, and her dream showed that wish fulfilled' (Freud 2010, p. 175). Irma, a woman Freud had been treating, had not responded to treatment as well as he had hoped. Once she finished treatment with Freud, he asked a colleague about her current state, and he was told she was not well. The dream occurred that night following the conversation, and it consisted of the realisation that Irma's recovery was not caused by Freud's inability to cure her, rather it was caused by an injection administered by his

friend Otto with a dirty needle. Freud explained the whole oneiric experience in *The Interpretation of Dreams:*

> A large hall – numerous guests, whom we were receiving. – Among them was Irma. I at once took her to one side, as though to answer her letter and to reproach her for not having accepted my 'solution' yet. I said to her: 'If you still get pains, it's really only your fault.' She replies: 'If you only knew what pains I've got now in my throat and stomach and abdomen – it's choking me.' – I was alarmed and looked at her. She looked pale and puffy. I thought to myself that after all I must be missing some organic trouble. I took her to the window and looked down her throat, and she showed signs of recalcitrance, like women with artificial dentures. I thought to myself that there was really no need for her to do that. She then opened her mouth properly and on the right I found a big white patch; at another place I saw extensive whitish grey scabs upon some remarkable curly structures which were evidently modelled on the turbinal bones of the nose. – I at once called in Dr M., and he repeated the examination and confirmed it … Dr M. looked quite different from usual; he was very pale, he walked with a limp and his chin was clean-shaven … My friend Otto was now standing beside her as well, and my friend Leopold was percussing her through her bodice and saying: 'She has a dull area low down on the left.' He also indicated that a portion of the skin on her left shoulder was infiltrated. (I noticed this, just as he did, in spite of her dress.) … M. said: 'There's no doubt it's an infection, but no matter; dysentery will supervene and the toxin will be eliminated. We were directly aware, too, of the origin of her infection. Not long before, when she was feeling unwell, my friend Otto had given her an injection of a preparation of propyl, propyls … propionic acid … trimethylamin (and I saw before me the formula for this printed in heavy type) … Injections of that sort ought not to be made so thoughtlessly … And probably the syringe had not been clean. (Freud 2010, p. 132)

By analysing the latent content of this particular dream, he came to realise that he wanted to distance himself from contributing to the cause of Irma's incomplete recovery so much so, that his dreams fulfilled the wish by finding a solution to the problem, blaming the needle for her ailment. Thus, the dream relieved him from the guilt he was burdened with, a commonly

repressed emotion. Similarly, Freud proposed that the human psyche also uses displacement, a defence mechanism, during dream processes to ease or shield the overwhelming feeling of guilt, claiming 'what is clearly the essence of the dream-thoughts need not be represented in the dream at all' (Freud 2010, p. 325). By replacing the subject of the repressed feelings with another subject that appears to have no connection to each other, the dream becomes less sinister, and the person is protected from feeling remorse for any ill-feelings.

All of these theories and proposals were developed and published in the late 1890s and early 1900s, during which Barrie composed and went on to write and publish his most famous works. It is likely that Barrie would have been aware of Freud and his work, and the content of his texts provides evidence that he too, was interested in the human psyche and the enigmatic significance of dreams. *The Little White Bird,* published in 1902, devotes one of its chapters to describing 'lock-out time', an event that occurs every evening in Kensington Gardens, where the magical creatures that hide during the day are able to roam free, 'he saw, however, that it must be past Lock-out Time, for there were a good many fairies about' (Barrie 1930, p. 92). Here, lock-out time is representative of sleep and the oneiric, where the ego's defences are significantly lowered; however, he also highlights the daunting fact that the content of our dreams is still around during the day, 'it is just hiding until it is safe to come out, they live in the daytime behind the railings, where you are not allowed to go' (Barrie 1930, p. 107). However, the symbolism in Barrie's novel shows 'lock-out time' as more than a representation of dreams, it is also a reminder that death is inevitable, with every evening that passes, the closer one gets to being permanently locked out 'when we reach the window it is Lock-out Time. The iron bars are up for life' (Barrie 1920, p. 115), which is a sign of Thanatos, the death drive, coming to the surface, as the ego's defences are lowered during the dreaming process.

Therefore, through analysing the childhood experiences that shaped the adult that Barrie became, the relationships he retained throughout his life and the presence of break-

through theories on the human psyche during his academic career, it can be concluded that his writing has more depth beneath the surface. Each fictional novel and play became a source of quasi-therapy for Barrie, delicately revealing aspects of his repressed life with the use of fantastic characters undertaking wild and magical adventures, whilst all the time reminding the reader of the striking familiarity with reality. When unconventional urges and feelings originate from the id, they are then shaped by the ego in order to conventionalise them, leading to the impulse becoming more socially acceptable. Finally, the superego acts as a moral compass, ensuring the decision to act on the impulse is well-informed. Thus, the three are 'characterized by what they do to one another, and by how they together determine behaviour' (Freud & Neu 2008, 67).

Sublimation is a defence mechanism proposed by Freud, and later developed by his daughter Anna, and it refers to 'the displacement of the instinctual aim in conformity with higher social values' (Freud 1937, p. 54). It involves the process of channelling these unacceptable feelings, and transforming them into socially acceptable actions by way of adapting in order to live a constructive life:

> The third issue in abnormal constitutional dispositions is made possible by the process of 'sublimation,' through which the excessive excitations from individual sexual sources are discharged and utilized in other spheres, so that no small enhancement of mental capacity results from a predisposition which is dangerous as such. (Freud 1938, p. 506)

Freud believed that sublimation is a common defence mechanism utilised by many people on a daily basis. One example he gave addressed the way in which someone would learn to live with overwhelming sexual urges, driven and motivated by the act of looking or staring at the genital area by perhaps choosing to pursue a career as an artist, transforming the interest as it is 'turned from the genitals to the form of the body' (Freud 1938, 456).

Thus, Barrie's whole writing career, creating works of fact and fiction, may be a process of sustained sublimation, as he learned how to deal with repressed emotions bubbling under the surface of his mind, adapting in order to conform and fit into the norms of society. All of the above Freudian theories contribute to the understanding of Barrie in order to understand the reasons why he repeatedly attempted to access the mind of a child and live through their eyes, all the way through his adult life, whilst the following chapters will address how this helped him achieve a higher state of consciousness.

## Chapter 2 The Quest for Individuality in a Conforming Society

'At seventeen, Barrie was barely five foot—and had stopped growing. He had not yet begun to shave. He was still a boy', claimed Andrew Birkin, friend of the Llewelyn Davies children (Birkin 2003, p. 41). From a young age, Barrie failed to fade into the background of accepted male norms, growing at a much slower rate to those around him, and drawing attention to it by keeping one of the largest breeds of dog as a pet, a Saint Bernard. Whilst the effects of the many traumatic life experiences on Barrie proved to be monumental for the adult he became, societal influence also had an impact on his development. Throughout his writing, Barrie repeatedly represents societal roles in different circumstances, highlighting the power that culture can have on an individual. Three of his novels, *Better Dead*, *Peter Pan*, and *Tommy and Grizel*, address the weight of societal pressures on different people in varying circumstances. In *Better Dead*, the word 'society' is mentioned 36 times in total, averaging at one mention every second page, whilst the word appears 18 times in *Tommy and Grizel*. In contrast, *Peter Pan* only mentions it once – the main difference between these three novels being the age profile of each main protagonist: adults in *Better Dead* and *Tommy and Grizel* and a child in *Peter Pan*. Thus, immediately, Barrie draws attention to the prominent ideal of childhood and to the freedom from the pressures experienced in adulthood.

Barrie struggled with his mental health, using his gift with words during the day as an escape from the reality of life; however, come nightfall when he was alone with just his thoughts, he was overwhelmed with anxieties he could normally ignore, 'I lie awake busy with the problems of my personality' (Barrie 1937, p. 98). With his parents expecting him to follow a traditional path, and study for a career in medicine, ministry or law, Barrie was reluctant to succumb to the conventions of the Victorian period, referring to his mother in his memoir as 'bending over the cradle of her first-born, college for him already in her eye' (Barrie 2014, p.

11). With persuasion from his mother, who drew attention to the fact that his brother David, had he still been alive, would have attended college, Barrie studied at the University of Edinburgh, reading English literature. When speaking about the happiest times of Barrie's life, Birkin asserts, 'Edinburgh was the loneliest. He was a man among men; and yet he was not a man' (Birkin 2003, p. 44). However, trying to place his parents' happiness at the top of his priorities, by ensuring he would not give their neighbours and peers a reason to judge the family negatively, was achieved at the expense of his own well-being, and ultimately compromised his own mental state.

Barrie made it clear in his writing that his parents were socially conscious, and that societal roles played a huge part in his family; therefore, he needed to take this into consideration for many of his life decisions. In his memoir devoted to his mother, Barrie describes her as a person who liked to keep up with appearances. On a trip to a luxurious hotel, he explains her attempt to conceal her amazement at the extravagance she witnessed, in a bid to come across as if she were accustomed to such a life, 'I remember how she beamed—yet tried to look as if it was quite an ordinary experience—when we alighted at the hotel door' (Barrie 2014, p. 39). She is also described as using her 'society manner' (Barrie 2014, p.39) to speak, which suggests it is not an instinctive method of diction for her, but was an attempt to mimic the type of people she would like to please and to make herself more likeable to them. Consequently, it becomes apparent that even to the people around him, it was important not to stray too far from the type of life that was expected of them to lead.

With the prospect of becoming a writer, came the daunting experience of moving to a city. Living in a town in Scotland, packing up and moving to a city such as London was a terrifying and often discouraged choice, with many returning without their hoped-for outcomes and an abundance of time lost, and disappointment felt, in the process. Barrie's family struggled with his choice of career, and of course, with his decision to relocate in order to

pursue his dreams. In his memoir to his mother, Barrie acknowledges the feelings experienced by his mother during this unsettling time of their lives:

> While I was away at college she drained all available libraries for books about those who go to London to live by the pen, and they all told the same shuddering tale. London, which she never saw, was to her a monster that licked up country youths as they stepped from the train; there were the garrets in which they sat abject, and the park seats where they passed the night. Those park seats were the monsters glaring eyes to her, and as I go by them now she is nearer to me than when I am in any other part of London. I daresay that when night comes, this Hyde Park which is so gay by day, is haunted by the ghosts of many mothers, who run, wild-eyed, from seat to seat, looking for their sons. (Barrie 2014 pp. 18-19)

This paragraph not only addressed the fears of a worrying mother; it also highlights the dangers of the unknown. His mother had become so engrossed with the stories and tales she heard of the city, that she took to the libraries to find out whether her suspicions were justified. The short statement in the middle of the description of all the panic and turmoil, 'which she never saw', pulls the whole fantastic image back to reality. His mother had never been to London, therefore, no book from the library could accurately capture the city's character or prospects, nor could they rid her mind of the monsters that she envisioned, glaring through the gaps in the park benches as her son sits down to write a few more words into one of his diaries. Hence, once again, Barrie reminds the reader of the peril of listening to stories and hearsay from others, and thus, of the importance and reassurance that can be drawn from first-hand experiences.

As he matured, it was evident that Barrie felt the immense pressure placed upon him to conform to social expectations, and to lead a life based upon the norm at that time. One custom that leaned on him in particular was the assumption that males in the 1800s would find a wife, get married and start a family, thereby fulfilling their role as the breadwinner whilst their wife reared their children (Steinbach 2017, p. 21). Barrie's struggle with his own grasp on masculinity seems to have been driven by the liminality of society; it appears he is neither

masculine or feminine, homosexual nor heterosexual. As mentioned in previous chapters, Barrie's marriage to Mary Ansell was a far cry from what would be described as a conventional heterosexual marriage. In 1887, before he became acquainted with his future wife, he wrote an article entitled 'My Ghastly Dream' for the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, where he described a recurring dream he had, starting when he was a child:

> When this horrid nightmare got hold of me, and how, I cannot say, but it has made me the most unfortunate of men. In my early boyhood it was a sheet that tried to choke me in the night. At school it was my awful bed-fellow with whom I wrestled nightly while all the other boys in the dormitory slept with their consciences at rest. It had assumed shape at that time: leering, but fatally fascinating; it was never the same, yet always recognisable. One of the horrors of my dream was that I knew how it would come each time, and from where. (Barrie 1887)

He begins by likening the dream to a struggle for air, closing in on him the more he tries to draw his breath. His dream shows the combat against societal oppositions previously referred to, as the oxymoron 'fatally fascinating' shows both hesitation and eagerness to explore despite the danger that looms, a danger that would seem to symbolise the reality of life experiences. The most striking part is the depiction of familiarity in a negative light, as usually, the unknown is a much more terrifying concept than knowing. Freud addresses this in his publication on 'The Uncanny', as he states, 'the uncanny is that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar' (Freud et al. 1955 p. 220). Referring to the German words *Heimlich* (homely) and *Unheimlich* (unhomely), Freud argues that the unfamiliar creates discomfort (Freud et al. 1955, p. 220). However, he also emphasises that the uncanny does not equate to unfamiliarity, and that discomfort and uncertainty can disguise themselves in the familiar when depicted through a different light, which can be seen here as Barrie's impending reality morphs into his 'fatally fascinating', 'never the same yet always recognisable' (Barrie 1887) struggle for breath.

He continues, alluding to this unfamiliarity that is rooted in his reality, as his nightmare takes the form a woman, with his apprehension towards marriage a fear he was all too familiar with being a central factor:

> I do not recall it in my childhood, but they tell me that, asleep in my cot, I would fling my arms about wildly as if fighting a ghost. It would thus seem that my nightmare was with me even then, though perhaps only as a shapeless mass that a too lively imagination was soon to resolve into a woman. My weird dream never varies now. Always I see myself being married, and then I wake up with the scream of a lost soul, clammy and shivering. (Barrie 1887)

Barrie's physical struggle in bed can be seen as indicative of the inner battle taking place between the life and death drives, Eros and Thanatos. Freud claimed that in relation to the grapple between the two drives, 'any restriction of this outward-directed aggression would be bound to increase the degree of self-destruction' (Freud 2002, p. 55).

Thus, the detrimental impacts that are caused start to materialise and show themselves in the form of physical ailments. Explaining how the nightmare is still with him in adulthood, he admits that he can only assume it began when he was a baby, however, the content is now the same every time it occurs. Here he gives the first mention of marriage, and how the dream always ends the same: he awakens in sheer panic. Freudian theory suggests that 'everyone has wishes that he would prefer not to disclose to other people and wishes that he will not admit even to himself' (Freud 2010, p. 183). These wishes therefore manifest in a dream, becoming the representation of the desire or wish that could not be fulfilled. Thus, Barrie's recurring dream can be seen as symbolic of the pressure he feels to adapt to societal traditions and find a wife, whilst being completely aware that married life was not a choice he would have freely made for himself. Figuratively, the pressure around his neck causing him to gasp for air is not caused by a woman or a ring around his finger: it is caused by society. Barrie then goes into further detail about the content of his dreams:

> My ghastly nightmare always begins in the same way. I seem to know that I have gone to bed, and then I see myself slowly wakening up in a misty world. As I realise where I am the mist dissolves; and the heavy shapeless mass that weighed upon me in the night time when I was a boy, assumes the form of a woman, beautiful and cruel, with a bridal veil over her face. When I see her she is still a long way off, but she approaches rapidly. I cower in a corner till she glides into the room and beckons me to follow her … Her power is mesmeric, for when she beckons I rise and follow her, shivering, but obedient. We seem to sail as the crow flies to the church which I attended as a child, and there everyone is waiting for us. (Barrie 1887)

The language here shifts from 'cower' to 'mesmeric', to 'a long way off' to 'rapidly', and begins to give a sense of urgency, where the mist disappears and a woman is described as being far away yet suddenly, she is in front of him, while her beckoning prompts him to rise immediately and follow her as they take the most direct route possible to arrive at the church.

The woman described here is the subject of Barrie's fascination, yet fear continues to overwhelm him as he follows her 'shivering, but obedient' (Barrie 1887). This part of the dream is suggestive of coming-of-age, and the fast pace of growing up and integrating into society as an independent adult. This is immediately followed by a sense of loneliness, everyone is waiting for him and his wife – they are all there to support the marriage that he had no idea was arranged, and he almost had to be hypnotised in order to attend:

> One hideous night she came for me in a cart. I was seized hold of by invisible hands and flung into it. A horrible fear possessed me that I was being taken away to be hanged, and I struggled to escape … My hands were bound together with iron chains, and as soon as I snapped them a little boy with wings forged another pair. Many a time when awake I have seen pictures of that little boy generally with arrows in his hands, one of which he is firing at some man or woman. In pictures he looks like a cherub who has over-eaten himself, but, ah, how terribly disfigured he is in my dreams! He is lean and haggard now, grown out of his clothes, and a very spirit of malignity. She drives the cart, laughing horribly as we draw nearer and nearer the church, while he sits behind me and occasionally jags me with an arrow. When I cry out in pain she turns and smiles

> upon him, and he laughs in gay response. (Barrie 1887)

The recurring bounding of his hands provides a patent symbol of repression, 'it is impossible to overlook the extent to which civilization is built up on renunciation, how much it presupposes the non-satisfaction of powerful drives – by suppression, repression or some other means' (Freud 2002, p. 38). This is suggestive of the restrictive nature of societal expectations, as, regardless of how many times he breaks free from the chains, they will always be retied, as society depends on the processes that cause an individual to bend or turn away from their core values and beliefs.

Furthermore, Barrie resumes the dream-description with the introduction of another character. In Roman Mythology, Cupid was the child of Venus, the goddess of love. Typically, if asked to visualise the cherub, most would describe a small, plump infant in some sort of white drapery, bearing a bow and arrows on his back (Spencer 2009, p. 186). Cupid is thought to embody the idea of love and desire, helping people along with their feelings by shooting arrows, 'with him, the centre of attention often shifts away from the body or sex acts and towards the mind, toward the emotions attending desire' (Tinkle 1996, p. 97). Here, when the desire is absent the image of Cupid is transformed to one of a vindictive and evil nature. Thus, in the portrayal of his dream, Barrie exhibits a prime example of repression in action:

> We are justified in concluding that these dreams are distorted and the wish fulfilment contained in them disguised to the point of being unrecognizable precisely owing to the repugnance felt for the topic of the dream or for the wish derived from it and to an intention to repress them. (Freud 2010, p. 183)

The pressure placed on men to get married, and the responsibility for the upkeep of a union between two people, was a concept that became too heavy for Barrie. He repressed his feelings about it, and they materialised in dreams, with normative marital symbols and characters being represented as warped versions of themselves, and clearly a Freudian reading adds to our

understanding of his state of mind at this time.

Additionally, there were many questions around Barrie's sexuality throughout his lifetime, with homosexuality and bisexuality being frowned upon in the 1900s (Shipley 2012, p. 153). Thus, the presence of chains around his wrists, and the haze in which he finds himself as the dream commences, may symbolise a longing for homosexual desire and also, a sense of confusion as his attempts to see clearly are hindered by the fog. In relation to Barrie's complex relationship with love and sex Green states, 'although clearly valuing 'love' as a higher ideal, he nevertheless agonizes about the part played by sexual passion' (Green 2017, p. 186). For Barrie, this dream shows despite the uncanny sublime element is non-existent between the pair, love does not seem to play a part in the scene either. This confusion that may be experienced during heterosexual feelings and experiences can be derived from this dream, as his betrothed takes joy in his pain, smiling and laughing whilst they continue to force him to go through with the marriage when it should be a day revolving around love, happiness and mutual feelings between the pair. Consequently, all of these issues combined continued to haunt him when his ego's defences were at their lowest, as he went to sleep each night. Unusually, Barrie recalls this dream as having stemmed from his childhood, a time when usually, the concept of sexuality is not yet understood. However, the dream gets progressively worse as he grows older, drawing attention to the benefits of childhood and the resilience that children possess, where vivid dreams do not have as much of an effect on them as they do in adulthood.

Perhaps one of the clearest examples of Barrie's apprehension towards societal expectations can be found in his first novel *Better Dead*. It is no coincidence that he had endured some of his most difficult years of his life in college as he then came home to work on this satirical novel with overwhelming traces of pessimism. Although the publication was a failure, Birkin claims it was down to the level of intellect of the intended audience, 'it was too sophisticated for the general reader. He had written it from his head, not from his heart—indeed

one reviewer went so far as to suggest that the novel was a collaboration between Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde' (Birkin 2003, p.56). Published in 1887, this piece has undeniable autobiographical tones throughout. Whilst discussing a paragraph published by Sonnenschein & Co., that introduces Barrie's novel, Nash highlights the significance of the wording of the paragraph. Instead of stating who the author is, they write 'the title page will bear the name J. M. Barrie' (Nash 2015, p. 28). Nash goes on to say 'the relegation of the author's name to the end of the paragraph, and the corresponding elevation in importance of 'the hero', reflects Barrie's distinctive habit of hiding behind his fictional masks' (Nash 2015, p. 28), showing how he always had a tendency to favour make-believe over reality.

The protagonist Andrew, an author who was born in Scotland, decides to relocate to London, because of the abundance of career opportunities he believes it offers in comparison to his hometown. However, when he arrives, after being rejected from several job openings, he quickly discovers that there are much more suitable, confident and qualified candidates to compete against:

> This is the saddest spectacle in life, a brave young man's first meeting with the world; how rapidly the milk turns to gall! … Here was a young Scotchman, able, pure, of noble ambition, and a first medallist in metaphysics. Genius was written on his brow. He may have written it himself, but it was there. He offered to take a pound a week less than any other secretary in London. Not a Cabinet Minister would have him. (Barrie 2018, p. 7)

Like Andrew, Barrie came out of college, after going against his parent's wishes and pursuing an education in order to become an author, and he returned home, highly qualified, yet unable to secure a stable job. Even with the optimism surrounding the possible opportunities within cities, Andrew discovers that life is much more complicated than simply moving to another country and immediately securing a job, regardless of his level of qualifications. By the eighth page of the novel, the intense sense of defeat is palpable, 'in a fortnight his enthusiasm had

been bled to death. His testimonials were his comfort and his curse. He would have committed suicide without them, but they kept him out of situations' (Barrie 2018, p. 8). This is true for the entirety of Barrie's life, as through an abundance of tragedies during his lifetime, ironically, the one thing society tried to steer him away from became his source of encouragement, as his writing developed into a form of escapism, and even a method of therapy. The cynicism that can be seen from the title amplifies as the novel progresses, when Andrew finds himself in a deep depression before he takes interest in a stranger, 'pacing the streets, his brow was furrowed with lines, but they spoke of cares of the past' (Barrie 2018, p. 13). After witnessing the stranger follow a man and then push him into the water without a second thought, the stranger took Andrew's arm, and they began conversing. The stranger explains that the man he killed was a good man, and an excellent philanthropist, however, he is better off now. He then urges Andrew to tell his story, which becomes a testimony as the stranger admits to Andrew, 'when we left the Embankment my intention was to dispose of you in a doorway' (Barrie 2018, p. 28).

The paragraph that follows this admission embodies a common theme that will appear in many of Barrie's novels and plays – the advantage of youth:

> 'Youth', continued the stranger, 'is enthusiasm, but not enthusiasm in a straight line. We are impotent in directing it, like a boy with a toy engine. How carefully the child sets it off, how soon it goes off the rails! So youth is wrecked. The slightest obstacle sends it off at a tangent. The vital force expended in a wrong direction does evil instead of good. You know the story of Atalanta. It has always been misread. She was the type not of woman but of youth, and Hippomenes personated age. He was the slower runner, but he won the race; and yet how beautiful, even where it run to riot, must enthusiasm be in such a cause as ours!' (Barrie 2018, p. 18)

In a way, Andrew's youth saves him in a life-or-death scenario, which is indicative of Barrie's mind-set, as he went on to write his most distinguished novel, *Peter Pan*, which followed the

many adventures of the boy who would never grow up. Furthermore, the symbolism provided of a train going off the rails caused by any small bump on the track is suggestive of the dangers of the adult world and the burdens that follow, and thus, how youth is always a more desirable state.

As the novel progresses towards the midsection, the tone implied from the title begins to materialise, as the stranger starts to speak of human life as something that is at one's disposal, as he becomes more comfortable in Andrew's presence, 'oh, I picked him up at Charing Cross. He was better dead' (Barrie 2018, p. 20). The stranger repeatedly justifies his cause to Andrew, becoming defensive when questioned, as the conversation moves forward and backwards between them, with Andrew continually questioning the justification needed to come to such conclusions, and the morality behind the killing of specific people whom it is believed the world could do without. The stranger ultimately claims the key to survival is a form of narcissism and selfishness, when Andrew asks if the deceased man's life was not as sacred as his, to which the stranger replies 'that is his concern' (Barrie 2018, p. 21).

In 1914 Sigmund Freud developed a theory referring to narcissism, which he aptly called, *On Narcissism,* which dived into the presence of self-absorption in humanity and its sources. He postulates that all babies are born with a form of narcissism, which accounts for the self-fixation that occurs in the oral stage of development (Freud 1961, p. 78). However, as they grow and mature, the fixation can become problematic, and conflict begins to occur within the individual's ego. Thus, the obsession is redirected and placed on an external substance or object where it becomes the 'ego ideal'. As Freud suggested in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, if this becomes unsuccessful and unappreciated within the situation, the drive is internalised, and the individual develops narcissistic tendencies, becoming more self-orientated and self-gratified. Andrew, the stranger and even Barrie in his ghastly dream, all have one thing in common; they have all reached the same stage where they acknowledge that they cannot fulfil

the demands of society and thus, must adapt in order to survive:

> On previous occasions we have been driven to the hypothesis that some such faculty develops in our ego which may cut itself off from the rest of the ego and come into conflict with it. We have called it the 'ego ideal', and by way of functions we have ascribed to it self-observation, the moral conscience, the censorship of dreams, and the chief influence in repression. We have said that it is the heir to the original narcissism in which the childish ego found its self-sufficiency; it gradually gathers up from the influences of the environment the demands which that environment makes upon the ego and which the ego cannot always rise to; so that a man, when he cannot be satisfied with his ego itself, may nevertheless be able to find satisfaction in the ego ideal which has been differentiated out of the ego. (Freud 1961, p. 2171)

In this novel, both Andrew and the stranger share a common ego ideal: the desire to be successful. The stranger has a radical method of achieving it, describing the concept of killing anyone in his way as 'a trivial matter' that is 'hardly worth going into at any length' (Barrie 2018, p. 21), whilst Andrew takes some convincing, 'I don't understand' (Barrie 2018, p. 21). However, both expose a narcissistic streak to their personalities as they advocate for their entitlement to specific positions, mainly based on age rather than experience.

Again, Barrie, although he was never the biggest fan of his own novel, and in later years attempted to distance himself from his first published work, managed to use wit, imagination and satire to convey the over-whelming concept of self-importance that epitomised middle-class society in the late 1800s and early 1900s. By claiming that some people were better dead once they had achieved their goals in life, he satirically highlights the debilitating reality of adulthood, and the inability to find one's place in society, a problem no child would ever need to worry about. He also toyed with the Darwinian notion of survival of the fittest, literally addressing the popular convention at the time in his novel, with the older characters being murdered in order to make room for younger, fitter individuals, 'the strongest live and the weakest die' (Darwin 2008, p. 221). For Andrew, at the point of the depletion of his

enthusiasm towards life, he contemplated suicide (Barrie 2018, p. 8) believing he had achieved the most he could hope for in life, therefore, feeling he would be better dead than holding valuable space on earth. Yet when he meets the stranger, he is ironically taught a lesson, namely that his decision was subjective, and thus, if he chose to take his own life, it would be the only definitive way in which he could not achieve anything else.

As Andrew sells himself to the stranger in order to gain membership to the group, he eventually finds himself as a member of the Society for Doing Without Some People (S.D.W.S.P.). However, he fails to secure any feelings of acceptance, inclusion or approval that usually accompany participation in such group activities. In fact, Andrew actually finds himself on edge, with the other group members, who as part of the S.D.W.S.P., all partake in assassinations on a regular basis, continuously paying close attention to Andrew's neck; 'until his wandering eyes came to rest on the young man's neck' (Barrie 2018, p. 28), 'and still his eyes were fixed on the probationer's neck' (Barrie 2018, p. 29), 'he caught the eyes of two of the company riveted on his neck … from that time until he left the rooms one member or other was staring at his neck' (Barrie 2018, p. 30). Freud, in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, addressed the group mentality to which of humanity are attracted at different stages of their lives, where their own self-worth becomes so suppressed that they adjust their character in order to succumb to the expectations of society. Freud raises the questions of why people decide to sacrifice their own desires and goals in life in order to follow someone or something that is celebrated in society, when their core beliefs are substantially oppositional and contradictory:

> We thus have an impression of a state in which an individual's separate emotion and personal intellect are too weak to come to anything by themselves and are absolutely obliged to wait till they are reinforced through being repeated in a similar way in the other members of the group. We are reminded of how many of these phenomena of dependence are part of the normal constitution of human society, of how little originality and personal courage are to be found in it, of how much every individual is

> ruled by those attitudes of the group mind which exhibit themselves in such forms as racial characteristics, class prejudices, public opinion, etc. (Freud 1949, p. 82)

Here, Freud suggests group mentality and reinforcement is a leading factor in the occurrence of individuals' straying from their morals and conforming to society's expectations, which can be seen in *Better Dead,* with Andrew becoming more and more open to the values of the S. D. W. S. P. as the novel progresses, with the members repeatedly providing justification to their actions, thus continually reassuring Andrew.

Freud goes on to discuss Wilfred Trotter's *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War* and his theory on the 'herd instinct' (Trotter 1953). He discusses the innate fear of being alone that is communally shared between the human race. This fear gives rise to the herd mentality, which encourages each person to conform to society to avoid danger or to achieve success, regardless of the detrimental impact it can have on the person themselves:

> Trotter derives the mental phenomena that are described as occurring in groups from a herd instinct 'gregariousness' which is innate in human beings just as in other species of animals. Biologically this gregariousness is an analogy to multicellularity and as it were a continuation of it. From the standpoint of the libido theory it is a further manifestation of the inclination, which proceeds from the libido, and which is felt by all living beings of the same kind, to combine in more and more comprehensive units. The individual feels incomplete if he is alone. The dread shown by small children would seem already to be an expression of this herd instinct. Opposition to the herd is as good as separation from it, and is therefore anxiously avoided. But the herd turns away from anything that is new or unusual. The herd instinct would appear to be something primary, something 'which cannot be split up'. (Freud 1949, pp. 83-84)

Animals lack the same depth of emotions that humans experience and therefore guilt is unknown to them, and within a group setting, humanity can substitute guilt for pride. Thus, Andrew becomes a prime example of an individual, who was at their lowest point, and gave into the 'herd instinct' in order to be a part of something greater than himself, and to feel a

sense of belonging, although the morality of the group was non-existent.

As this chapter is being written, it seems undeniably apt that one of the most popular songs on the radio at the moment is *Forever Young* covered by Becky Hill, where she sings 'it's so hard to get old without a cause' (Becky Hill Official 2020). As Andrew works through his probation period in the S.D.W.S.P., he writes and presents his thesis to the society, proposing that all people over the age of forty-five should be murdered in order to free up space and jobs, and to also give young men the impetus to get their lives in order sooner, with the prospect of dying at such a young age being a causal factor. However, he soon comes to the abrupt realisation that sometimes, no matter how hard one tries to fit in, if the people in the group are hostile, there is no way to change their minds:

> 'They were drawing lots for you when I left the room,' said the president 'But what have I done?' gasped Andrew.
> 'They didn't like your thesis. At least, they make that their excuse.' 'Excuse?'
> 'Yes; it was really your neck that did it.' (Barrie 2018, p. 62)

Ultimately, in this novel, Barrie uses the protagonist to tell a satirical story of life, highlighting the impending doom that accompanies succumbing to the pressure of societal expectations. Barrie and Freud are both seen to be relatively outspoken in relation to the detrimental impact of such pressures on the human psyche. Whilst Freud uses his methodical process of psychoanalysis to highlight the effects of herd mentality, Barrie uses writing to depict several different scenarios where individuals are placed under a microscope with their friends, family and other people within their society peering down through that lens. In Andrew's case, Barrie uses his vivid imagination to place a character in a dystopian society, where immorality and injustice are the norm, following Andrew as he progresses through the stages of denial, uncertainty, acceptance and finally, rejection. Ultimately, Andrew learns his position in society, and his road to success or failure, is his concern and can only be determined by his own merits,

regardless of whether other people's achievements stand in the way of your journey. Thus, in the end, Barrie shows the reader the age-old lesson, 'you cannot respect a man and kick him' (Barrie 2018, p. 63).

Alongside the undeniable pessimistic outlook towards the world depicted in *Better Dead, Sentimental Tommy* written in 1896, conveys the overwhelming struggles of a family under immense financial pressure, failing to break the never-ending cycle of poverty. Written in a conversational style, the story follows Tommy through the coming-of-age period of his life, showing how he adapts and overcomes the obstacles he faces on a daily basis. This novel, a prime example of a Bildungsroman in its finest form, a novel that follows a character through their formative years. Here, Barrie shows the life experiences of a child, hardened by the sufferings of poverty, whilst bearing witness to questionable morals and the untimely death of a loved one (another echo of Barrie's own experiences as a child). However, it was never intended to be that way. Barrie himself claimed that it was adult Tommy that had his interest from the start, 'this is not in the smallest degree the book I meant it to be. Tommy ran away with the author' (Barrie 2007, introduction), again showing that he could not escape the realisation that childhood is the most pivotal period in one's lifetime. Barrie introduced his novel by elaborating on his progression from planning a novel based on the life of an adult to a complete turn-around, following the childhood encounters into adolescence:

> When we meet a man who interests us, and is perhaps something of an enigma, we may fall a-wondering what sort of boyhood he had; and so it is with writers who become inquisitive about their own creations. It was Sentimental Tommy the man that I intended to write here; I had thought him out as carefully as was possible to me; but when I sat down to make a start I felt that I could not really know him at one and twenty unless I could picture him at fifteen, and one's character is so fixed at fifteen that I saw I must go farther back for him, and so I journeyed to his childhood. Even then I meant merely to summarize his early days, but I was loath to leave him, or perhaps it was he who was loath to grow up. (Barrie 2007, introduction)

Here, Barrie, like Freud, is emphasising the importance of the earliest years of life, implying that it is impossible to capture the true essence of a character in adulthood without exploring the years and life experiences that led up to the time in question. Once again, Barrie is addressing the recurring theme in his literature, the fear of growing up, as he leaves it open to interpretation whether he was fascinated by Tommy as a child, or by the fact that Tommy was reluctant to grow up. Thus, Barrie the creator of Tommy, cannot escape the adolescent years experienced by his characters, which was perhaps the beginning of Peter Pan, the boy who also 'was loathe to grow up' (Barrie 2007, introduction).

The overwhelming presence of parental influence can be seen at a glance, with the word 'father' appearing eighty-four times in the novel, and the word 'mother' emerging two hundred and twenty-seven times throughout. This component of family connections, along with the autobiographical elements of the novel materialising as a mirror of his own life, meant that Barrie decided to dedicate his introduction to his mother, prompted by the tradition of reading his completed novels to her with the hopes of obtaining her seal of approval and support. This introduction became long-winded, and because of this, Barrie decided to pen a memoir to her, completed in 1896, the same year *Sentimental Tommy* was published. Thus, *Margaret Ogilvy* was born (Birkin 2003, p. 91). By creating a printed book devoted to his mother, he ensured he included her imprint of support by immortalising her, with her becoming a solid acknowledged contribution to his legacy forever.

Although it consists of only sixteen and a half lines, the opening paragraph of *Sentimental Tommy* is packed full of information, beginning by introducing Tommy as a child, then jumping forward to describing him as an adult, and finally referring back to his childhood describing his interactions with his mother:

> The celebrated Tommy first comes into view on a dirty London stair, and he was in sexless garments, which were all he had, and he was five, and so though we are looking

> at him, we must do it sideways, lest he sit down hurriedly to hide them. That inscrutable face, which made the clubmen of his later days uneasy and even puzzled the ladies while he was making love to them, was already his, except when he smiled at one of his pretty thoughts or stopped at an open door to sniff a potful. On his way up and down the stair he often paused to sniff, but he never asked for anything; his mother had warned him against it, and he carried out her injunction with almost unnecessary spirit, declining offers before they were made, as when passing a room, whence came the smell of fried fish, he might call in, 'I don't not want none of your fish,' or 'My mother says I don't not want the littlest bit,' or wistfully, 'I ain't hungry,' or more wistfully still, 'My mother says I ain't hungry.' His mother heard of this and was angry, crying that he had let the neighbors know something she was anxious to conceal, but what he had revealed to them Tommy could not make out, and when he questioned her artlessly, she took him with sudden passion to her flat breast, and often after that she looked at him long and woefully and wrung her hands. (Barrie 2007, p. 1)

Immediately, Barrie ensures that the reader is made aware of Tommy's social class, as he is described as dirty and dressed in hand-me-downs, sitting on stairways trying to get even just a sniff of some food being prepared. The first impression given of his mother is one that mirrors his own home life; here too, the mother is someone who attempts to keep up with appearances. However, Tommy's situation is much graver and more serious, as it seems his mother takes her pride to such an extreme, that sometimes the children go hungry as she refuses to ask for help, in a society where even having healthcare was a privilege, '"it's a kid or a coffin", he said sharply, knowing that only birth or death brought a doctor here' (Barrie 2007, p. 3). Barrie hints at Tommy's wit and astuteness, when he chooses to tell people that it was his mother who told him he is not hungry, cunningly phrasing it in order to leave a possibility for the offer of food to be forced upon him. However, Tommy is so accustomed to life in the slums, and so conscious of his position in society at such a young age, that he finds it impossible to understand how his mother could think telling people they are not in the least bit hungry while standing in dirty, ripped clothing, could hide the truth behind their situation. This contrasts the

adult's outlook on life with childhood innocence, where things are simpler and mostly seen in black and white – he is hungry, and it is undeniably evident, so saying otherwise will not change this harsh reality.

The plot of the story aims to engross the reader by its undeniable familiarity, with the occurrence of events from everyday life. Tommy, as suggested by the title, is a nostalgic character, who attempts to contemplate and reflect on his life and the circumstances surrounding him. He enlists the therapy of writing as a form of escapism, in order to cope with the burdens he encounters, which are contributed to by societal expectations, once again, similar to the experiences of Barrie himself. Freud, in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, written in 1929, explores the conflict between the quest for individuality and the pressure to conform to social norms that is experienced when someone is part of society, and the implications this internal struggle can have on the individual, 'the sickness of the individual is ultimately caused and sustained by the sickness of his civilization' (Marcuse 1962, p. 245). Freud claims that it is through behaviour and decision making, that one can see the effects of this internal conflict manifesting:

> We will therefore turn now to the more modest question of what human beings themselves reveal, through their behaviour, about the aim and purpose of their lives, what they demand of life and wish to achieve in it. The answer can scarcely be in doubt: they strive for happiness, they want to become happy and remain so. This striving has two goals, one negative and one positive: on the one hand it aims at an absence of pain and unpleasurable experiences, on the other at strong feelings of pleasure. 'Happiness', in the strict sense of the word, relates only to the latter. In conformity with this dichotomy in its aims, human activity develops in two directions, according to whether it seeks to realize – mainly or even exclusively – the one or the other of these aims. (Freud 2002, p. 17)

Here, Freud suggests that the primary goal in life is to achieve and maintain a state of contentment, a theme that is consistent in Barrie's novels and plays, as each character goes to

extreme lengths to secure their right to happiness, which, in most cases as previously discussed, can lead to the occurrence of detrimental impacts on each character in the process. Barrie continued telling Tommy's story, as he went on to write a sequel to the novel in 1900, named *Tommy and Grizel*. Throughout both novels, the narrators make it their goal to subjugate Tommy, distancing him by ensuring the reader does not have enough time to form a bond with him, and breaking any possible moments of partiality with a snide remark, '"may I?" replied Tommy, idiotically. He knew it was idiotic, but that mood now had grip of him' (Barrie 2009, p. 47).

Whilst the subject matter of *Sentimental Tommy* revolves around his boyhood, *Tommy and Grizel* begins with Tommy in adulthood, and the narrator takes his role as the provider of a disparaging perspective to a much more serious level, 'he was really glad to hear it, for to be called Tommy by anyone was now detestable to him (which is why I always call him Tommy in these pages)' (Barrie 2009, p. 47). As Tommy, also referred to as T. Sandys, takes to London in an attempt to become a well-respected and credited author, the narrator ensures the reader is reminded of Tommy's potential:

> But Pym read it, and a great deal more, for himself. No wonder he stormed, for the impossible had been made not only consistent, but unreadable. The plot was lost for chapters. The characters no longer did anything, and then went and did something else: you were told instead how they did it. You were not allowed to make up your own mind about them: you had to listen to the mind of T. Sandys; he described and he analysed; the road he had tried to clear through the thicket was impassable for chips. (Barrie 2009, p. 14)

However, the cynicism towards his choice of career did not end there. Repeatedly, the narrator takes time to describe at some length, the extent of the 'drivel' composed by Tommy:

> Then another trifle by him appeared, shorter even than the others; but no man in England could have written it except T. Sandys. It has not been reprinted, and I forget

> everything about it except that its subject was love. 'Will not the friends of the man who can produce such a little masterpiece as this,' the journals said, 'save him from wasting his time on lumber for the reviews, and drivelling tales?' (Barrie 2009, p. 225)

These quotes have undeniable biographical themes, with Barrie himself struggling to impress critics with most of his earliest novels, with *Better Dead's* publication resulting in a loss of £25 (Birkin 2003, 83). Thus, the narrator represents the constant scrutiny experienced by all budding authors, as they struggle to ensure their passion becomes a career, which will enable them to provide for themselves and their families. Furthermore, his unwillingness to give into the constant disapproval surrounding him may be a manifestation of the death instinct within him, as despite his own doubts and self-loathing of his work initiated by others, he continues to relive the experience by writing more and subjecting himself to further criticism. Freud suggests that the aim of this process is 'a need to restore an earlier state of things' (Freud 1961, p. 51), thus indicative of the purpose of Barrie's later creation of the novel and play, *Peter Pan,* where youth is the ultimate goal.

Furthermore, the narrator can be seen as a metaphor for society, whilst Tommy represents the individual, whether that individual is a promising author, an artist, or simply, a lower-class citizen attempting to change their life for the better. Tommy continually tries to break the cycle of rejection by writing another piece in the hopes that just one will break the mould, whilst the narrator constantly passes negative judgements on each and every attempt. The judgement gradually becomes more demeaning as the protagonist grows older, with the word 'bitter' being used twenty-six times, fifteen of which see the term being applied directly to Tommy, hence, proving that Barrie's apprehension towards growing old is evident in each one of his novels and plays. Interestingly, Freud addresses the impact other people have on an individual's potential, 'the three sources of our suffering: the superior power of nature, the frailty of our bodies, and the inadequacy of the institutions that regulate people's relations with one another in the family, the state and society' (Freud 2002, p. 27). Each of the three work

together concurrently, as each one has the potential to affect another. The institutions to which Freud refers to include every social norm that normalises the limitation of each individual depending on their ethnicity, background, social class and many other determining factors.

In *Tommy and Grizel*, however, there is a mention of a breakthrough which comes in the form of T. Sandys' *Letters to a Young Man Soon to be Married,* 'if you have any memory you do not need to be told how that splendid study, so ennobling, so penetrating, of woman at her best, took the town. Tommy woke a famous man' (Barrie 2009, p. 19). Finally, there is a moment of release, where the strenuous work is noticed and accredited. Again, the similarities between Tommy and Barrie are patent, with Barrie being renowned for his creation of the character Peter Pan, whereas only a miniscule fraction of *Peter Pan* enthusiasts are aware of his earlier work. Similar to *Sentimental Tommy*, *Peter Pan* follows the story of a young boy, with the noticeable difference between the two main characters being Peter's permanent state of youth. As previously mentioned, as Tommy grows, so too does the constant background noise of pessimism and disapproval. Peter, however, does not go through the same experience. Evidently, societal expectations are invisible in the eyes of a child, thus, Peter does not feel the need to fulfil a role in society. He is free to appear in green tights, fly away from responsibilities and make decisions on a whim, without feeling the consequences or weight of a heavy conscience, 'the new-born child does not at first separate his ego from an outside world that is the source of the feelings flowing towards him. He gradually learns to do this, prompted by various stimuli' (Freud 1916, p. 8). Peter's arrested growth and development means his progression from an individual to an individual within society is incomplete.

Peter Pan is one of the most difficult characters in literature to describe, as his characteristics range from those of innocence to sinfulness; from being passive to authoritative; and from exuding joy to exhibiting bouts of extreme anger. At one stage or another during the novel, Peter represents all types of people in society, with his youth ensuring that he faces no

repercussions for any immoral behaviour. However, today's society also mirrors Peter's story and perspective, with people becoming fixated on the prospect of youth, from appearances to the exhilaration of freedom experienced before responsibilities take over. Barrie 'made a world to suit his own fancy' (Blake 1972, p. 73), with change playing a major role in each of the texts. In *Better Dead,* Andrew represents an individual who finds death a more promising prospect than change, whilst Tommy in *Sentimental Tommy,* is continually aiming for change, with a multitude of setbacks and rejections. Meanwhile in *Peter Pan,* Barrie successfully created a character who lived in a place that resisted all kinds of change, when the real world was altering at an alarming rate. The Neverland was free from boundaries, with time standing still for its chief resident, 'of all the delectable islands The Neverland is the snuggest and most compact, not large and sprawly, you know, with tedious distances between one adventure and another, but nicely crammed' (Barrie 2012 p.9). Hence, Barrie created Peter and The Neverland as an escape, so that no matter how much changed around him physically, when one reads *Peter Pan,* there is always a safe haven waiting to be accessed through Peter.

Therefore, each of Barrie's texts depict an individual attempting to accustom themselves to society, showing different levels of adaptability to their environment and embodying the vulnerability that accompanies the process of societal adaptation, which becomes more onerous with the onset of maturity. Both *Better Dead,* and his article 'My Ghastly Dream' for the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch* in 1887, address the pressure of societal expectations, where men feel compelled to marry, have children and look after their families financially. His openness about the content of his dreams in an era of breakthrough psychoanalytical theory, suggests he was aware of the detrimental effects that such pressure had on his psyche. Barrie used Andrew's character and his role in the S.D.W.S.P. as a metaphor for his own life, satirically rectifying the problem of overpopulation and few job prospects through what appeared to those in the committee to be a simple proposition.

However, the character comes to the realisation that although eternal youth is the ultimate solution to avoiding the tribulations of adulthood, it can be relived through children: 'more than two years have passed since Andrew's marriage, and already the minister has two sweet grandchildren, in whom he renews his youth' (Barrie 2018, p. 65).

Similarly, Tommy in *Sentimental Tommy* and *Tommy and Grizel*, learns that with maturity comes responsibility, which in turn leads to more disapproval and rejection from his peers. In a world where he grows up sitting on steps with the hopes of an offer of leftover food, Tommy's imagination was the key to his survival; Barrie's imagination also became a therapeutic retreat whilst many around him judged and scrutinised his every move. Finally, in *Peter Pan*, the reader is introduced to a character who seemed to embody the most important trait necessary to achieve eternal bliss – youth. Peter's permanent adolescence is proven to be the reason for his versatility in the face of adversity, with negativity and judgement ricocheting off him, and barely leaving a mark, like the faint mark children who fail to stay forever young leave on The Neverland (Barrie 2012, p.). Consequently, youth can be seen as the key to a heightened sense of consciousness, with issues never becoming serious enough to leave a lasting effect on the individual, and therefore, repressed memories are few.

## Chapter 3 Dreams: A Window to the Unconscious

The occurrence of dreams is a universal experience that has the ability to connect the whole human race. Everyone has experienced a dream or nightmare, whether it is possible to recall the finer details of it or not, the parts that one does remember, and the overwhelming sensation of incomprehensibility present in the initial moments after one awakens from a deep sleep, have become the subject of psychoanalytic theorists' studies for decades. As discussed in the previous chapter, J. M. Barrie's short article 'My Ghastly Dream' submitted and published in the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch* in 1887 stands as a salient paradigm for his underlying thought processes, highlighting the apparent troubles that leaned on him on a daily basis.

Similarly, the words of his novels and plays hold parallel levels of meaning which allow us to see more into the mind of J. M Barrie. In each text, the references to the oneiric are indicative of the suppressed apprehension he feels towards adulthood, the ageing process and the struggles that accompany them. Therefore, by analysing his dream content with the help of psychoanalysis, it can be concluded that Barrie was at his happiest as a child. Through the characters in his novels, Barrie 'passes between dreams and reality as through tissue-paper' (Birkin 2003, p. 83). Ultimately, his reality at the time of writing each of his novels and plays, becomes apparent through the presence of dreams, with each unveiling one parallel theme; fear of adulthood and the responsibilities that accompany the process of maturation.

This chapter will draw together all of these elements in order to conclude with the assumption that growth became detrimental to Barrie's psyche, and using his fiction to return to a state of innocence experienced in childhood became an escape from the burdens he faced in his daily adult reality. It is in fact, more difficult to find a piece written by Barrie that does not mention dreams, daydreams, sleeping or nightmares, than it is to find one that does. Moreover, several of his novels contain multiple oneiric references, with his first novel *Better*

*Dead,* using dreams to frame the whole story, as they are mentioned at both the beginning, 'every girl has her day- dreams, and Carrie has perhaps made a dream of me' (Barrie 2018, p. 3), and the end of the book, 'sometimes, when thinking of the past, the babble of his lovely babies jars upon him, and, still half-dreaming, he brings their heads together' (Barrie 2018, p. 65). Freud devoted a vast amount of time into studying the occurrence, recurrence and significance of dreams, which resulted in the publication of *The Interpretation of Dreams* in 1899. The opening paragraph of his book describes the process of analysing dreams and the significance the unearthed contents hold:

> In the pages that follow I shall bring forward proof that there is a psychological technique which makes it possible to interpret dreams, and that, if that procedure is employed, every dream reveals itself as a psychical structure which has a meaning and which can be inserted at an assignable point in the mental activities of waking life. I shall further endeavour to elucidate the processes to which the strangeness and obscurity of dreams are due and to deduce from those processes the nature of the psychical forces by whose concurrent or mutually opposing action dreams are generated. Having gone thus far, my description will break off, for it will have reached a point at which the problem of dreams merges into more comprehensive problems, the solution of which must be approached upon the basis of material of another kind. (Freud 2010, p. 35)

Thus, Freud concludes that behind each dream is an abundance of information that reveals the hidden thoughts, desires and fears that are not always accessible through other therapeutic techniques. Consequently, he decided dream analysis was a form of therapy that was far too valuable to overlook when undertaking studies on the human psyche. Whilst Freud claimed, 'we are not in general in a position to interpret another person's dream unless he is prepared to communicate to us the unconscious thoughts that lie behind its content' (Freud 2010, p. 259), this chapter will argue that Barrie's dreams, and his many dream references in his fiction, can be interpreted, as they are a physical manifestation of his thoughts, both conscious and

unconscious.

Whilst Freud and his studies became significant in the twentieth century, Barrie's work possessed an immeasurable number of psychoanalytical references, suggesting he was not only familiar with Freud's theories, but that he was also highly influenced by the concept of psychoanalysis, 'psychoanalysis was beginning to sweep into fashion, and Barrie was one of its earliest victims' (Birkin 2003, p. 523). Barrie's memoir, *Margaret Ogilvy*, devoted to his beloved mother, is an example of this, as his various references to dreams act as a façade, hiding the underlying meaning of his words. Towards the beginning of the memoir, Barrie discusses the powerful connection shared between his mother and her father, although his grandfather had passed away before he was born. This bond was solidified each night as his grandfather read James Hyslop's poem 'The Cameronian's Dream' to her, a memory she held so dearly, she ultimately carried on the tradition by reading the poem to Barrie in her father's voice (Barrie 2014, pp. 9-10). The poem is based on the Battle of Aids Moss in 1680, where Richard Cameron and several of his fellow Covenanters, a religious group based on Presbyterian Church of Scotland beliefs, were killed by government officials (Leask 2006, p. 83). However, it is the structure of the poem that is so intriguing, as it shifts from a factual account to an oneiric sequence, almost indicative of an imagination in overdrive, or moreover, a representation in words of how the human psyche drifts in and out of consciousness when one falls asleep, 'Where Cameron's sword and his Bible are seen, Engraved on the stone where the heather grows green… And far up in heaven in the white sunny cloud, The song of the lark was melodious and loud' (Leask, 1884 pp. 748-749). Thus, the customary recital of the poem proved to have left a lasting impression on Barrie, and perhaps was his first memory of dreams representing more than just an unrelated whimsical sequence of events that occur at night, as the poem connects fantasy to reality from one line to the next.

Whilst the 'The Cameronian's Dream' was being read to Barrie before bed, Freudian

theory was being drafted and tested, with *The Interpretation of Dreams* putting theories about the significance of dreams into words:

> We may even go so far as to say that whatever dreams may offer, they derive their material from reality and from the intellectual life that revolves around that reality … Whatever strange results they may achieve, they can never in fact get free from the real world; and their most sublime as well as their most ridiculous structures must always borrow their basic material either from what has passed before our eyes in the world of the senses or from what has already found a place somewhere in the course of our waking thoughts—in other words from what we have already experienced either externally or internally. (Freud 2010, p. 44)

Here, Freud emphasised the importance of acknowledging that, regardless of how outrageous and unrecognisable to one's everyday life the contents of the dream may be, they are always rooted, however difficult they are to unearth, in some part of one's reality. Barrie was already aware of the true meaning of the metaphors that consumed his dreams at night. Whilst in his memoir, he reminisces on his mother's brief childhood, cut short by the death of her own mother at the age of eight, he slowly sees the progression from child to woman, which prompts him to acknowledge the inevitable feeling he possessed whilst growing up, that reminded him that the day would also come when he would need to leave the toys and games behind:

> The horror of my boyhood was that I knew a time would come when I also must give up the games, and how it was to be done I saw not (this agony still returns to me in dreams, when I catch myself playing marbles, and look on with cold displeasure); I felt that I must continue playing in secret, and I took this shadow to her, when she told me her own experience, which convinced us both that we were very like each other inside. (Barrie 2014, p. 10)

Barrie fails to hide his feelings towards childhood, repeatedly referring to the state of harmony that accompanies the first segment of life, reminding the reader that regardless of the surrounding environment, the most important part of one's day usually revolves around

returning to a game of hide-and-seek, having a bedtime story read to them or colouring in the unshaded letters of the newspaper headlines. Hence, an analysis of his dreams not only revealed that their subject matter was deeply rooted in his reality and his experience as a child, but also, the apprehension he held towards societal expectations. The necessity for children to fulfil the role of an adult depending on family circumstances weighed heavily on Barrie, meaning he was never sure when his time as a child would come to an abrupt halt.

Concerns about following the same path as his mother materialised for Barrie, with the death of his brother, as he gradually took it upon himself to become her caregiver as her condition caused by grief worsened. With Barrie taking up adult responsibilities at such a young age, it was after this traumatic experience that the actuality of growing up started to affect him mentally: it was now his reality. From attempting to cheer his mother up in her bed that she refused to leave, he realised he would no longer be running from the dinner table in order to play with his trainset after tea-time. Freud claims, 'we are thus driven to admit that in the dream we knew and remembered something which was beyond the reach of our waking memory' (Freud 2010 p. 45), suggesting the guilt Barrie felt in his dream whilst playing with marbles was much more than it seemed at surface level. It was the result of Barrie's transition out of childhood bliss, far before his time, a feeling he supressed in order to prioritize his mother's health and well-being, which later materialised in his dreams.

It seems as the memoir goes on, the mention of dreams becomes one of many forms of wish-fulfilment found in his texts, as even when Barrie is unsure if he was dreaming or not whilst his eyes are closed tightly, he accepts the improbability of what he thinks is going on around him:

> It is early morn, and my mother has come noiselessly into my room. I know it is she, though my eyes are shut, and I am only half awake. Perhaps I was dreaming of her, for I accept her presence without surprise. (Barrie 2014, p. 38)

For his mother, who seldom left her room, 'she is in bed again, looking as if she had never been out of it, but I know her (Barrie 2014, p. 29), to awaken before him was extremely unlikely. Thus, he immediately accepted it without opening his eyes, in a manner similar to how dreams can be as wild and extravagant as possible, yet one accepts the events of the night and carries on with one's daily life. Freud refers to the occurrence of dreams of convenience, where a wish fulfilment can easily be realised through by the dream taking the place of an action:

> These examples will perhaps be enough to show that dreams which can only be understood as fulfilments of wishes and which bear their meaning upon their faces without disguise are to be found under the most frequent and various conditions. They are mostly short and simple dreams, which afford a pleasant contrast to the confused and exuberant compositions that have in the main attracted the attention of the authorities. (Freud 2010, p. 151)

He undertook studies on many patients, one of whom was instructed to wear an ice pack on her jaw as a result of surgery. During a dream she had, her mind constructed a feasible explanation as to why she should not have to wear it, which resulted in her waking each morning without the pack on her jaw (Freud 2010, p. 150). Similarly, Barrie writes about how his mother mentions he had not been working late, suggesting he had been sleeping in, his mother says, 'I'm sweer to waken him—I doubt he was working late' (Barrie 2014, p. 38), thus, through his attempt at a wish fulfilment, Barrie slept for a longer period of time, breaking his morning routine, perhaps in the hope that it would encourage his mother to leave her room first. Therefore, Freudian theory suggests that Barrie's desire for his mother's depression to subside, and his longing to see her leave her bedroom without his constant encouragement, once again, materialised in his dream content.

Similarly, towards the end of *Margaret Ogilvy,* Barrie delves into this desire in more detail, describing his mother as 'up and doing … though pitifully frail' (Barrie 2014, p. 72). All the hopes he held so dearly for her to be well enough to join him on a trip to the country seemed like they were about to come true, as she organised her belongings into trunks. He recalled his memory of that day saying, 'ah, beautiful dream! I clung to it every morning; I would not look when my sister shook her head at it, but … I too knew that it could never be' (Barrie 2014, p. 72). With the wish for his mother to revert in some part, back to her healthier, more content state being not being fulfilled in reality, his desire for their trip to go to plan was about which he had already accepted defeat, even before the defeat occurred, showing 'the non-fulfilment of one wish meant the fulfilment of another' (Freud 2010, p. 175). This encounter happened to be Barrie's last moment with his mother before she passed away, showing the impact oblivion can have on a moment shared between two people. Thus, the reference to the 'beautiful dream' hinted at the joy experienced in that moment between Barrie and his mother, despite both parties being aware of the truth, and deliberately choosing not to be awoken to the reality from which they were briefly escaping. Furthermore, the reference to this 'beautiful dream' also stems from Barrie as a child, with Margaret Ogilvy representing a picture of health and most importantly, fulfilling her role as a mother. Hence, if dreams are, as Freud suggests, a fulfilment of a wish, then Barrie's ultimate wish to revert to his childhood, becomes a vision before him through the sight of his mother, a prospect that seemed too surreal to be anything but a dream.

*Tommy and Grizel,* written in 1900, in the same year Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* was published. At a glance, Barrie's novel appears to have an abundance of references to dreams and the mystery of the events that occur during sleep. The word 'dream' itself is mentioned a total of twenty-two times, whilst the word 'woke' is written twenty-one times, with the phrase 'I woke up' being repeated by Grizel to Tommy, consecutively three times

towards the end of the novel, evoking a sense of urgency:

> Then she ceased to cower. The girlish dignity that had been hers so long came running back to her. As she faced him there was even a crooked smile upon her face.
> 'I woke up,' she said. 'I woke up,' she said.
> 'I woke up,' she said, as if the words had no meaning to herself, but might have some to him. (Barrie 2009, p. 257)

Freud addressed the subject of the oneiric, and how repetition is a common occurrence in many dreams and is often representative of a real event that took place before the dream manifested (Freud 2010, p. 208). The repeated quote is followed by the narrator's brief moment of uncertainty, where they question whether their experience was real or a figment of their imagination, 'but was it, then, all a dream? he cried, nearly convinced for the first time, and he went into the arbour saying determinedly that it was a dream' (Barrie 2009, p. 258). Thus, Barrie utilised repetition in order to hint at the moments of confusion when one awakens, whilst attempting to decipher between reality and fantasy.

Furthermore, Freud outlined the importance of the connection between sleep and dreams and the time in which they most commonly occur. Throughout Barrie's life, his work reflected his apprehension towards growing old and consequently, the end of life, and Freud emphasised the correlation between night-time and endings:

> It might perhaps occur to us that the phenomenon of dreaming could be reduced entirely to that of memory: dreams, it might be supposed, are a manifestation of a reproductive activity which is at work even in the night and which is an end in itself. (Freud 2010, p. 53)

Whilst Barrie established a clear correlation between night and endings, Freud emphasises the significance of night as an ending itself, where the day comes to a halt and new beginnings lay ahead on the other side of the sunset. The story of *Tommy and Grizel* is a sequel to *Sentimental*

*Tommy*, therefore, the characters have left their childhood and are now adults with worries, responsibilities and innumerable anxieties, which is symbolic of Barrie's pessimistic mind-set towards adulthood. This connection to endings is undeniable, when a search of the word 'night' in the novel shows it appears an astounding eighty-nine times throughout.

The article Barrie contributed to the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch* discussed in Chapter 2, is laden with references to the turmoil he experienced through repetitive dreams which consisted of the same scene of a marriage taking place, which commonly signifies the beginning of a relationship and new life as a union begins between the person and their partner. However, Barrie conclusively attributes marriage to an ending rather than a beginning. This theme reoccurs in *Tommy and Grizel*:

> Punishment sought him in the night, when he dreamed constantly that he was married to whom scarcely mattered; he saw himself coming out of a church a married man, and the fright woke him up. But with the daylight came again his talent for dodging thoughts that were lying in wait, and he yielded as recklessly as before to every sentimental impulse. (Barrie 2009, p. 26)

Again, the marriage is associated with adjectives such as 'punishment', 'fright', 'dodging' and 'yielded'. Both dreams acknowledge the fact the partner is hardly recognisable, suggesting Barrie's apprehension is aimed at arranged marriages, or the pressure placed upon a male to marry at a certain stage of their lives, regardless of whether they have made a genuine connection, rather than marriage as a general concept. He alludes to the danger of a marriage based on societal expectations. Thus, the cycle of dreaming and the correlation it holds to endings is undeniable in Barrie's work, and indicative of his mind- set whilst writing his articles and novels.

Typically, the references to endings would be more abundant in a novel like *Tommy and Grizel*, that follows the later years of the characters' lives. For Barrie, this is not the case. As previously mentioned, *Sentimental Tommy*, the prequel to *Tommy and Grizel*, is a

Bildungsroman where Tommy is introduced as a child, growing and maturing as the novel progresses. Whilst in this novel, dreams are referred to half as many times as in the sequel, it is the topic of night-time that holds the most significance. The word 'night' appears a total of one hundred and forty-six times in *Sentimental Tommy*, whilst from the mid-section to the end of the novel, the word is used more frequently in close proximity, with the word appearing up to five times on the same page:

> Tommy said to Elspeth at the first opportunity, 'that sometimes comes here at nights and kindles the fire and warms themsels at the gloze … Has she no been seen at all hours o' the night, Grizel following a wee bit ahint … This made the Jacobite meetings eerie events for Elspeth, but Tommy liked them the better; and what were they not to Grizel, who ran to them with passionate fondness every Saturday night? Sometimes she even outdistanced her haunting dreads, for she knew that her mother did not think herself seriously ill; and had not the three gentlemen made light of that curious cough? So there were nights when the lair saw Grizel go riotous with glee … where she had been happiest, saying, wistfully, and with pretty gestures that were foreign to Thrums, 'Good-night, dear Cuttle Well! Good-by, sweet, sweet Lair!' as if she knew it could not last. (Barrie 2009, p. 170)

Hence, the significant variation in quantities of use of such specific terminology suggests that Barrie regarded the end of childhood as a more traumatic experience than the progression towards adulthood, and the inevitability of the end of life. Thus, Barrie dwelled almost obsessively on the circumstances which he considered detrimental to his mental well-being, and the contents of his dreams became a manifestation of this constant fear he experienced.

It is in Barrie's later publication, *Peter Pan*, that his unique concept of dreams truly comes to life, with descriptions of magical characters and whimsical locations capturing the reader's attention from the beginning. The first mention of the fantastical character of Peter himself was in a novel written before *Peter Pan* named *The Little White Bird* in 1902. The novel begins with the narrator, Captain W, describing his interactions with a boy named David, with

whom he has a deep connection, 'the boy who calls me father' (Barrie 2019, p. 1). This is closely followed by an overwhelming sense of pessimism towards David's mother, which starts from the first paragraph of the novel and continues into the chapters, 'I have no desire to meet the woman' (Barrie 2019, p. 1); 'he failed, and his obvious disappointment in his mother was as nectar to me' (Barrie 2019, p. 69). The opening of the novel not only provides the reader with an idea of the narrator's opinion of other characters, but it also immediately introduces a dream which holds invaluable insight into the position the narrator holds himself:

> I had my delicious dream that night. I dreamt that I too was twenty-six, which was a long time ago, and that I took train to a place called my home, whose whereabouts I see not in my waking hours, and when I alighted at the station a dear lost love was waiting for me, and we went away together. She met me in no ecstasy of emotion, nor was I surprised to find her there; it was as if we had been married for years and parted for a day. I like to think that I gave her some of the things to carry … Were I to tell my delightful dream to David's mother … I might make a disclosure that would startle her, for it is not the face of David's mother that I see in my dreams. (Barrie 2019, p. 1)

Again, the concept of marriage appears in yet another dream description, but this time, the dream is not laden with frightening adjectives or a sense of urgency, but rather has a more desolate and lonesome tone. The long-lost love is described as 'dear' to him, yet there is a clear lack of emotion between the two; the words used seem to have lost their meanings. The Captain is disorientated, his home is called his home, but it is unrecognisable to his conscious mind. Freud's theory on 'The Uncanny' can be used here to address the contradictions, as The Captain's home is laden with unfamiliarity. Freud claims that 'what is novel can easily become frightening and uncanny; some new things are frightening but not by any means all. Something has to be added to what is novel and unfamiliar in order to make it uncanny' (Freud et al. 1955, p. 220). The addition here that suddenly makes the homely unhomely, is the introduction of a woman and the prospect of marriage. The Captain speaks of a marriage which in Barrie's

writings, is always accompanied by discomfort, yet the depiction of this relationship isn't as severe 'it was as if we had been married for years and parted for a day' (Barrie 2019, p. 1). Consequently, the introduction of a marriage and the social constructs that accompany the union shifts the perspective from recognisable to unrecognisable.

Freud describes the occurrence of marriage in dreams, claiming it can be seen as a symbol of 'a fear that marriage might cost him his freedom' (Freud 2010, p. 500). The narrator is also exhibiting a narcissistic side to the reunion, as he is confident that David's mother would be negatively affected by the realisation that she is not the topic of his dreams. He then discusses the virtuous Mary A, who despite sharing a name with Barrie's wife, Birkin claims was 'closely modelled on Sylvia Llewelyn Davies' (Birkin 2003, p. 138). David claims Mary has an unreciprocated preoccupation with him, 'has it ever been your lot, reader, to be persecuted by a pretty woman who thinks, without a tittle of reason, that you are bowed down under a hopeless partiality for her?' (Barrie 2019, p. 1). Captain W's original description of his 'delicious dream', read in the context of the dialogue that followed it in order to analyse the dream, explains although the proposed idea of marriage is one of detachment, the 'delicious' aspect is fulfilled by the control the narrator has in this dream, in comparison to other dream sequences that appear in Barrie's novels. Captain W ensures the reader realizes this, even by saying he hoped he gave her luggage to carry for herself, ensuring that his wife is not held in higher regard by him. With Barrie repeatedly expressing his apprehension towards societal pressures, and Freud claiming that marriage in dreams is a symbol of the loss of freedom, the dream Captain W experiences takes both aspects and creates a dream of wish fulfilment, where the overwhelming fear is addressed, and control is gained.

The tone of *The Little White Bird* changes, however, in the chapters when Peter Pan is mentioned, where Captain W repeatedly emphasises how Peter is not human, and the fantastical elements of the story such as fairies and flight begin to appear. It is during 'lock-out

time' which occurs at night, that Barrie's imagination is aroused, comparable to the process of dreaming:

> He saw, however, that it must be past Lock-out Time, for there were a good many fairies about, all too busy to notice him; they were getting breakfast ready, milking their cows, drawing water, and so on, and the sight of the water-pails made him thirsty, so he flew over to the Round Pond to have a drink. He stooped, and dipped his beak in the pond; he thought it was his beak, but, of course, it was only his nose, and, therefore, very little water came up, and that not so refreshing as usual, so next he tried a puddle, and he fell flop into it. When a real bird falls in flop, he spreads out his feathers and pecks them dry, but Peter could not remember what was the thing to do, and he decided, rather sulkily, to go to sleep on the weeping beech in the Baby Walk. (Barrie 2019, p. 88)

Hence, the shift in tone and mood is closely associated with the introduction and use of the imagination. Whilst Barrie is in the depth of reality, his attitude towards life leaks onto paper, however, when he speaks of the boy who will never grow up, the world is viewed in a strikingly differing light, with glimpses of hope and optimism coming through. Once again, imagination and childhood come together to provide the key to happiness.

Freud foregrounds the concept of imagination, and its bearings on the materialisation of dreams, claiming that although the dream content stems from real life events and emotions, the mind transforms these feelings into something hardly recognisable to the conscious mind, becoming a form of coping mechanism:

> But by way of contrast, the mental activity which may be described as 'imagination,' liberated from the domination of reason and from any moderating control, leaps into a position of unlimited sovereignty. Though dream-imagination makes use of recent waking memories for its building material, it erects them into structures bearing not the remotest resemblance to those of waking life … It shows a preference for what is immoderate, exaggerated and monstrous. But at the same time, being freed from the hindrances of the categories of thought it gains in pliancy, agility and versatility. It is susceptible in the subtlest manner to the shades of the tender feelings and to passionate

> emotions, and promptly in-corporates our inner life into external plastic pictures. (Freud 2010, p. 110)

Barrie's use of 'lock-out time' is a leading example of a structure bearing not even the remotest resemblance to that of waking life (Freud 2010, p. 110). Repeatedly, the theme of a lost childhood appears in his texts; therefore, although the magical and fantastical elements seem impossible to connect to reality, they are an indication of the repressed feelings of a childhood that ended before the child had the opportunity to experience the full magic of youth, manifesting through the phenomena of dreams. As Freud mentions, this process allocates a sense of freedom to the characters, which is applicable to 'lock-out time' in *The Little White Bird*, as at this time at night, the magical creatures of the garden are free to roam without fear, 'they led him civilly to their queen, who conferred upon him the courtesy of the Gardens after Lock-out Time, and henceforth Peter could go whither he chose, and the fairies had orders to put him in comfort' (Barrie 2019, p. 100)

It was a dream Freud had experienced himself that instigated his in-depth study of dreams, which lead to his conclusion that 'the interpretation of dreams is the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind' (Freud 2010, p. 604). Freud divided the concept of each dream into two sections, the manifest content and the latent content. The manifest content refers to the parts of the dream the individual can recall when they awaken, whilst the latent content contains the symbolism behind each dream, accessible only through a meticulous analysis of the individual (Freud 2010, p. 160). As previously mentioned in Chapter 1, the manifest content of this dream was in relation to a patient Freud was treating named Irma, who despite numerous therapy sessions, had failed to progress as effectively as he had hoped. Freud's dream explored this topic, where he had an encounter with Irma at a party, who expressed her frustration with the constant pain she was experiencing. Freud then determined the source of pain was caused by another doctor, his friend Otto, who had administered an

injection of toxins and with an assumed dirty needle (Freud 2010, p. 132). The guilt Freud felt about Irma's worsening condition weighed on him so much, that it became the topic of his dream. However, it is the events that unfolded in that dream that allowed Freud to conclude that it derived from his feelings about the treatment of his patient. The latent content of this dream, implies that by finding the cause of Irma's illness, and determining someone else was at fault, Freud was able to relieve himself of the guilt he experienced by being unable to help Irma recover, and he ultimately concluded, 'the dream represented a particular state of affairs as I should have wished it to be. Its content was the fulfilment of a wish and its motive was a wish' (Freud 2010, p. 143). Freud's analysis of his own dream stands as an imperative framework for the study of the meanings behind the utilisation of dreams in literature, and the significance they possess for an author in terms of wish fulfilment.

Whilst Kensington Gardens hosted a highly significant moment for Barrie, where he first met George, Jack and Peter Llewelyn Davies, a meeting that would steer the path of his life from that moment onwards, forever challenging his concept of home, Peter Pan's character is developed in *The Little White Bird*, where wishes became a common occurrence, with Peter finding himself trapped in Kensington Gardens and unable to return home. He secures wishes from the fairies, and uses them to get home to his mother who would be worried about his disappearance:

> 'I wish now to go back to mother for ever and always' … He went in a hurry in the end because he had dreamt that his mother was crying, and he knew what was the great thing she cried for, and that a hug from her splendid Peter would quickly make her to smile. Oh, he felt sure of it, and so eager was he to be nestling in her arms that this time he flew straight to the window, which was always to be open for him. But the window was closed, and there were iron bars on it, and peering inside he saw his mother sleeping peacefully with her arm round another little boy. (Barrie 2019, p. 111)

Peter's dream of his mother grieving for him as he went on his adventure was an obvious

example of wish fulfilment, as he had hoped she would be inconsolable with worry. Here, Barrie shows that children's dreams can be easier to comprehend than those of an adult. However, when he returned, he found his mother had replaced him with another child. The chapter concludes by saying 'when we reach the window it is Lock-out Time. The iron bars are up for life' (Barrie 2019, p.111), implying that Peter was aware that the time would come when he would no longer be regarded as a child, and he would then be expected to take his place as an adult in society, and by witnessing his mother move on to another child, he realised that when lock-out time comes, the end is imminent. This also correlates with Barrie's personal life, as when his brother passed away, the grief became the sole source of his mother's attention, and for Barrie, lock-out time commenced, and he was suddenly on the other side of the iron bars that once protected his childhood.

With many of his novels exhibiting various forms of wish fulfilment, the concept of *Peter Pan* or *Peter and Wendy*, published in 1911, is the greatest example of a wish fulfilment for the author; the story of the boy who would never grow up. When presenting the play to Charles Frohman in order to convince him to take it to the stage, Barrie, although afraid it would not be commercially successful, introduced *Peter Pan* to Frohman as 'a dream-child' of his (Birkin 2003, p. 230). The story is similar to Barrie's other works in terms of content, with the word 'dream' being utilised several times throughout; however, in this novel, the entirety of the plot is based upon sleep, night-time and dreaming. The first mention of Peter in the novel comes when Mrs. Darling first discovers him at night, 'Mrs. Darling first heard of Peter when she was tidying up her children's minds. It is the nightly custom of every good mother after her children are asleep to rummage in their minds and put things straight for next morning' (Barrie 2012, p. 4). At night, a child's mind is overcome with vivid imagery, where their conscious minds take a rest and the unconscious takes over. This is where Peter first appears – when the children are dreaming. Freud argues 'the dreams of young children are frequently

pure wish-fulfilments and are in that case quite uninteresting compared with the dreams of adults' (Freud 2010, p. 152), suggesting that in Wendy's case, Peter would represent a desire for adventure, mischief and magic. However, in the context of Barrie's creation of the story, the manifest content is much more complex, and can be analysed through studies of his thoughts and desires.

The novel progresses to a conversation between Mrs. Darling and Wendy where they discuss Peter together, with Mrs. Darling repeatedly assuring herself Wendy could only have been dreaming about Peter, despite the evidence of Peter's visit remaining by the window:

> She explained in quite a matter-of-fact way that she thought Peter sometimes came to the nursery in the night and sat on the foot of her bed and played on his pipes to her. Unfortunately she never woke, so she didn't know how she knew, she just knew … 'I think he comes in by the window,' she said. 'My love, it is three floors up.'
> 'Were not the leaves at the foot of the window, mother?'
> It was quite true; the leaves had been found very near the window. Mrs. Darling did not know what to think, for it all seemed so natural to Wendy that you could not dismiss it by saying she had been dreaming … 'My child,' the mother cried, 'why did you not tell me of this before?' 'I forgot,' said Wendy lightly. She was in a hurry to get her breakfast. Oh, surely she must have been dreaming … But, on the other hand, there were the leaves. Mrs. Darling examined them very carefully … Certainly Wendy had been dreaming. (Barrie 2012, pp. 11-12)

Mrs. Darling's recurring questioning of the appearance of Peter, despite her earlier admittance of her encounter with him whilst cleaning her children's minds, is suggestive of a form of denial, as somewhere in her mind she acknowledges that if he is capable of appearing to her then, it is possible that he now visits her children at night. Freud claims 'a dream is thinking that persists in the state of sleep' (Freud 2010, p. 551), which materialises in the first chapter as Mrs. Darling herself has a dream about Peter and The Neverland, 'while she slept she had a dream. She dreamt that The Neverland had come too near and that a strange boy had

broken through from it' (Barrie 2012, p. 6), proving that, although she consciously denied his existence, nevertheless, she repressed the worries that were brought on by the leaves left at the foot of the window. Thus, Barrie skilfully exhibits the ways in which Peter appears to people of different ages, and how each character reacts differently to Peter's presence and visits, hence, emphasising the advantage of childhood naivety for the human psyche.

The mention of The Neverland within the first few pages of the novel, whilst Mrs. Darling tidies her children's minds, sets the tone for the following chapters. Barrie begins by describing The Neverland, giving it vivid colours, fantastical characters and no physical borders, with the description resembling an oneiric portrayal. By assigning specific characteristics to The Neverland whilst also retracting them in the same breath, he allows the reader to interpret The Neverland for themselves:

> For The Neverland is always more or less an island, with astonishing splashes of colour here and there, and coral reefs and rakish-looking craft in the offing, and savages and lonely lairs, and gnomes who are mostly tailors, and caves through which a river runs, and princes with six elder brothers, and a hut fast going to decay, and one very small old lady with a hooked nose. (Barrie 2012, p. 8)

Immediately after, once Barrie has set the tone, he encourages the reader to leave behind the strains and stresses of their daily life, and attempt to access their own intimate version of The Neverland, 'of course The Neverlands vary a good deal. John's, for instance, had a lagoon with flamingoes flying over it at which John was shooting, while Michael, who was very small, had a flamingo with lagoons flying over it' (Barrie 2012, p. 8). Daydreaming and imagination intertwine, becoming the key to a full experience of The Neverland, and the story *Peter Pan*, and thus, Barrie ensures that the reader has an opportunity to access a higher state of consciousness, bringing them back to a place of serenity with which they were once familiar, 'occasionally in her travels through her children's minds Mrs. Darling found things she could not understand' (Barrie 2012, p. 9). Kavey addresses this in the publication, *Second Star to the*

*Right: Peter Pan in Popular Imagination*, saying, 'in an age of schedules and responsibilities that start increasingly earlier and earlier in childhood, the desire to withdraw into a place entirely of your invention, one that responds to your every daydream and nightmare, is incredibly seductive' (Kavey & Friedman 2009, p. 2). This is what Barrie achieves in the beginning of *Peter Pan*, forcing the reader to transport themselves to a place with no boundaries, similar to the process of dreaming, 'but in the two minutes before you go to sleep it becomes very nearly real' (Barrie 2012, p. 9).

By comparing and contrasting the different levels of importance of The Neverland to both Mrs. Darling and her children, Barrie is distinguishing from the outset, a clear distinction between the workings of the imagination in adults and in children:

> Children who remain faithful to the imagination will keep their The Neverlands as pure as possible, shunting 'real world' information to another map, while less dreamy children, or those with more interest in what they encounter in the nursery or at school, will allow the real world to contaminate the imagined landscapes of their The Neverlands. (Kavey & Friedman 2009, p. 97)

Kavey even draws a contrast between the children; those who commit entirely to their fantasy and those who incorporate reality into theirs. Smith also alludes to the use of night-lights, and the symbolism they hold for the Darling children's glowing consciousness (Smith 2012, p. 518), subject to the longevity of the lamp. As they are subject to growing old, their light of consciousness will dim. Each child faces the inevitability of losing faith in their The Neverland, with the real world taking centre stage as they grow into adulthood. Freud emphasises however, that it is not dreams that are responsible for the growth and preservation of the imagination, it is what occurs in the mind when it is at a state of unconsciousness that initiates the creation and thus, the contents, of dreams, 'the point is not that dreams create the imagination, but rather that the unconscious activity of the imagination has a large share in the construction of the dream-thoughts' (Freud 2010, p. 588). Hence, Barrie's creation of the oneiric The Neverland is

a mechanism to utilise both dreams and imagination in order to attempt to access this heightened consciousness and ultimately, to 'remain faithful to The Neverland' (Kavey & Friedman 2009, p. 97), even when as growing children they have outgrown it, and The Neverland has not remained faithful to them.

Further on in the novel, Barrie reiterates the apparent distinction between adulthood and childhood, highlighting the impacts that adulthood has on the psyche by describing the sleeping pattern of Peter in chapter thirteen:

> Sometimes, though not often, he had dreams, and they were more painful than the dreams of other boys … But on this occasion he had fallen at once into a dreamless sleep. One arm dropped over the edge of the bed, one leg was arched, and the unfinished part of his laugh was stranded on his mouth, which was open, showing the little pearls … Hook found him … What stayed him was Peter's impertinent appearance as he slept. The open mouth, the drooping arm, the arched knee: they were such a personification of cockiness as, taken together, will never again, one may hope, be presented to eyes so sensitive to their offensiveness. (Barrie 2012, pp. 164-166)

By acknowledging that Peter, although benefiting from his youthfulness, also experiences unpleasant dreams, Barrie is instigating a sense of reality in the midst of fantastical elements, reminding the reader that although youth is a more pleasurable state to be in, it is also the state from which the troubles that follow on into adulthood stem, 'though we think highly of the happiness of childhood because it is still innocent of sexual desires, we should not forget what a fruitful source of disappointment and renunciation, and consequently what a stimulus to dreaming, may be provided' (Freud 2010, p. 155). However, by describing the dreams as occurring 'sometimes, not often' (Barrie 2012, p. 164), he acknowledges that distasteful dreams are a much less common occurrence in childhood. The description that follows of Peter's appearance as he slept instils a sense of vulnerability, which is intertwined with innocence. Hook believes Peter is the epitome of arrogance, suggesting a sense of jealousy

towards the oblivious sleeping child. Hence, Barrie not only highlights the advantageous qualities of childhood by juxtaposing Peter and Hook, but also the reader, a witness to the peaceful sleeping child, encouraging the reader to investigate whether one's eyes are 'so sensitive to their offensiveness' (Barrie 2012, p. 166).

With his analysis making a clear connection between dreams and wish fulfilments, Freud anticipated the theory would be open to criticism, instigating questions on how a nightmare could possibly represent a hidden desire, 'it does in fact look as though anxiety-dreams make it impossible to assert as a general … that dreams are wish-fulfilments; indeed they seem to stamp any such proposition as an absurdity' (Freud 2010, p. 160). He asserted that any dismissal towards a dream and its connotation came from an internal opposition, that recognises that the interpretation of the dream will lead to the unveiling of unpleasant feelings and emotions that were initially supressed in order to avoid the experience of confronting them. This lead Freud into a discussion of the occurrence of distortion in dreams, again using his own example of a dream that, only upon in-depth analysis, was found to represent a wish fulfilment:

> Thus we are not only faced by the question 'How can distressing dreams and anxiety-dreams be wish-fulfilments?'; our reflections enable us to add a second question: 'Why is it that dreams with an indifferent content, which turn out to be wish-fulfilments, do not express their meaning undisguised?' Take, for instance, the dream which I treated at such length of Irma's injection. It was not by any means of a distressing nature and interpretation showed it as a striking example of the fulfilment of a wish. But why should it have needed any interpretation at all? Why did it not say what it meant straight out? At first sight the dream of Irma's injection gave no impression that it represented a wish of the dreamer's as fulfilled. My readers will have had no such impression; but neither did I myself before I carried out the analysis. Let us describe this behaviour of dreams, which stands in so much need of explanation, as 'the phenomenon of distortion in dreams.' Thus our second problem is: what is the origin of dream-distortion? (Freud 2010, p. 161)

Freud emphasises the significance of his research; if each dream were to evidently and

transparently exhibit the meaning behind the occurrence, then it would not be necessary to conduct any form of analysis on dreamwork, and dreams would just be an obvious escape-valve from repression. Hence, if the subject matter is distorted and unrecognisable to the dreamer, one needs to look past the manifest content, and undertake an analysis on the patient's psyche in order to understand the latent content which forces the dreamer's mind into a place of unconsciousness where the once unrecognisable can eventually be recognised. Even asleep, the forces of repression attempt to deny any notion of their origin. Subsequently, if Peter Pan is a dream-child to Barrie as he once claimed to Frohman (Birkin 2003, p. 230), then the novel can be interpreted as a distorted wish-fulfilment of Barrie's desire for his mind to remain forever young. Peter Pan is created by Barrie whilst 'dreaming, though wide-awake' (Barrie 2012, p. 154).

To conclude, the overwhelming presence of dreams within J. M. Barrie's novels cannot be overlooked as coincidental, especially when its composition coincided with Freud's development and publication *The Interpretation of Dreams,* a book that pioneered work on the unconscious mind and the importance for self-understanding and mental health for what can be revealed through dream analysis. Barrie's earliest work, *Better Dead*, frames the whole satirical novel with the concept of dreaming, implying that although the story tells a tale of irony and extreme solutions to everyday problems, there is also meaning to be found behind the sensationalised encounters. Meanwhile, in *Margaret Ogilvy*, the depth behind the contents of dreams comes to the surface, as they represent regret, fear and anxiety, especially revolving around the theme of growing old, with the realisation that even as a child, Barrie could not escape the fear of his childhood coming to an end one day.

In both *Tommy and Grizel* and *Sentimental Tommy*, the scenes are often dark and night-time is prominent, where endings accompany childhood in an abundance. The angst around marriage once again presents itself in Barrie's words, as both Tommy, in *Tommy and Grizel*,

and Captain W, in *The Little White Bird*, experience uncomfortable dreams where they find themselves unwillingly at the altar. Dreams have a negative connotation up until this point, they are stress-inducing and are accompanied by cynical adjectives – until Peter Pan appears. Although Peter also experiences unpleasant dreams, they are brief, and sleep is a comfort. Thus, with Freudian theory suggesting all dreams represent a form of wish fulfilment, and that 'the interpretation of dreams is the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind' (Freud 2010, p. 604), it can be concluded that Barrie's greatest wish that he hoped to fulfil was to access the higher state of consciousness he once knew as a child. Although it was an impossible ask, by creating Peter, he gave both himself and the reader a device that enabled them to experience what it would be like to remain forever young.

## Chapter 4 Keep on Flying: Transporting the Mind, Body and Soul

‘On attaining the age of eight, or thereabout, children fly away from the Gardens, and never come back. When next you meet them they are ladies and gentlemen holding up their umbrellas to hail a hansom’ (Barrie 2019, p. 163). Whilst the significance of dreams and the repressed desires they represent became a prominent aspect of J. M. Barrie’s writing, the presence of flight always managed to hover over the words, making an appearance within each text. This connection provides an insight into the mind of the author, showing how the frequent occurrence of flight in his texts contains a symbolic meaning that correlates with the oneiric process. Flight to and from the gardens becomes more than a mode of transport for the body, it also transports the mind and soul, as the children both metaphorically and physically encounter changes. Typically, flying away from a place represents a release, and a form of escape from an unpleasant or unbearable experience, accessing a state of euphoria determined and driven by freedom. Whilst there are several elements of this depicted through Barrie’s storytelling, he also manages to emphasise the risk that accompanies the euphoria of flight, from the technical difficulties that can occur and the dangers that may ensue, to the realisation that one day, when they reach eight years old, children will fly for the last time, hence restricting their access to the terminal for freedom. Consequently, here Barrie establishes a parallel, proposing that the real disappointment begins because they flew away from the Gardens of innocence, and implying the key to a higher sense of consciousness lies within the wonders of childhood.

As previously mentioned in Chapter 3, Freud addressed the phenomena of dreams, suggesting that the manifest content is only a surface level understanding of the events of a dream, whilst the latent content delves deep underneath this surface in order to unearth the symbolism that relates to each scenario (Freud 2010, p.143). The same paradigm can be applied to Barrie’s novels, *The Little White Bird* and *Peter Pan* in particular, as both the stories embody

an oneiric sequence throughout, shifting from reality to the imaginary in a matter of sentences. Freud discussed the feelings involved during a dream stating, 'the dreamer finds himself flying through the air to the accompaniment of agreeable feelings or falling with feelings of anxiety' (Freud 2010, p. 288). Here, Freud provides us with two important indicators for understanding the use of flight throughout Barrie's novels: firstly, the feeling of elation when freedom is established, and secondly, the sense of uncertainty when difficulties arise. In his novels, the doubts are intrinsically linked to the process of growing up:

> It is sad to have to say that the power to fly gradually left them. At first Nana tied their feet to the bed-posts so that they should not fly away in the night; and one of their diversions by day was to pretend to fall off buses [the English double-deckers]; but by and by, they ceased to tug at their bonds in bed, and found that they hurt themselves when they let go of the bus. In time they could not even fly after their hats. Want of practice, they called it; but what it really meant was that they no longer believed. (Barrie 2012, pp. 220-221)

Although Nana attempted to physically restrict the children by tying them down, the narrator accuses them of losing their ability to believe, thereby impacting on the use of their imagination, with the extra burdens weighing them down, and ultimately initiating the loss of their command of flight. Hence, this alludes to Freud's theory, as when one is mid-flight, the mind is elated, however the power of gravity ensures everything must come back down, leading to the feelings of dejection and apprehension emerging.

For every mention of flying in Barrie's novels, a reference to falling is not too far away, as he repeatedly establishes a balance between the illusory and the real, alluding to the human imagination that is continually interrupted by the reality of day-to-day life. The word 'falling', can relate to a number of feelings and actions such as 'falling asleep', 'falling in love', 'falling for a prank', or 'falling ill'. However, within these texts, the act of falling is predominantly accompanied by adjectives that involve descending, both physically and metaphorically, 'every

time a child says, "I don't believe in fairies," there is a fairy somewhere that falls down dead' (Barrie 2012, p. 37). During his development of dream analysis, Freud revealed a case study from a patient of his that had an issue with dreams where she repeatedly fell down:

> All the dreams of one of my women patients were characterized by her being 'rushed': she would be in a violent rush to get somewhere in time not to miss a train, and so on. In one dream she was going to call on a woman friend; her mother told her to take a cab and not to walk; but she ran instead and kept on falling down. – The material which came up in analysis led to memories of rushing about and romping as a child. (Freud 2010, p. 220)

This reference to rushing is once again reduced to a childhood experience by Freud where his patient's dreams nodded to rushing as a pleasurable memory in adolescence yet it appears as a stress indicator in adulthood. The panicking and time keeping seen here can be connected to Barrie's untimely departure from his childhood, where he became an adult before he even knew how to be a teenager. When speaking about his memoir *Margaret Ogilvy*, Andrew Birkin claims, 'it was, rather, a craving to experience a childhood he had never personally known: the childhood of Margaret Ogilvy' (Birkin 2003, p. 92), reiterating the damaging effects caused by his childhood being taken away from him. When Margaret Ogilvy's mother died when she was only eight years old, she was thrown into a premature role of caregiver and nurturer to her younger brother. Chaney argues that, while like her son, Margaret Ogilvy used storytelling in adulthood to ease the pain of a lost childhood (Chaney 2005 p. 43), the concernment around the enigma of growing old was clearly a burden that weighed heavily on his mother also, 'there is something amiss with responsibility, something awry with growing up' (Chaney 2005 p. 44).Consequently, Barrie's experiences caused him to feel rushed, and unprepared for a life on the other side of youth. Whilst the children learn and gain access to the ability to fly in *Peter Pan*, Barrie's constant reminder of how fragile happiness can be, and how it will all come crashing down at some stage in life, stands as a metaphor for the experiences from which he

tries to escape in his novels, yet fails to eradicate from his mind. Thus, both Freud's theories and Barrie's writing display expressions of repressed regret instigated by the memories of being rushed out of a state of ease and into a state of unease.

With *Margaret Ogilvy*'s reminiscent and nostalgic style of writing conveying an overall theme of realism, it is significant to note the lack of references to flight, flying, wings and freedom within that memoir, especially when it is directly compared to Barrie's fantastical story telling exhibited in *The Little White Bird* and *Peter Pan*, with both novels overflowing with the imaginary tropes. These fictional novels flow in oneiric sequences, allowing the repressed memories to emerge through fantastical scenes, which a memoir cannot allow due to its factual nature. As previously mentioned, Barrie establishes an equilibrium where flight is prominent, highlighting the dangers of falling that accompany the skill. However, this balance is uneven in his memoir; falling is mentioned several times, as Barrie's grandfather writes about his daughter Margaret Ogilvy's ailments, stating, 'I look on my right and left hand and find no comfort, and if it were not for the rock that is higher than I my spirit would utterly fall' (Barrie 2014, p. 12). This quote is closely followed with the opening to Chapter III, which begins with Barrie presenting the reader with the following description of his mother, 'my mother was a great reader, and with ten minutes to spare before the starch was ready would begin the 'Decline and Fall'—and finish it, too, that winter' (Barrie 2014, p. 15). On their own, these quotes may seem irrelevant, yet looked at in terms of the associative logic of the dreamwork, the falling references become more frequent and more telling. The quote, 'the blow has fallen—he can think of nothing more to write about' (Barrie 2014, p. 24), addresses one of Barrie's greatest fears, namely that his pen would ultimately be placed in a permanently horizontal position.

In an encounter between the mother and son, they speak about language, and Barrie tests her, isolating her vulnerabilities and challenging them nonetheless:

> We always spoke to each other in broad Scotch (I think in it still), but now and again she would use a word that was new to me, or I might hear one of her contemporaries use it. Now is my opportunity to angle for its meaning. If I ask, boldly, what was chat word she used just now, something like 'bilbie' or 'silvendy'? she blushes, and says she never said anything so common, or hoots! it is some auld-farrant word about which she can tell me nothing. But if in the course of conversation I remark casually, 'Did he find 'bilbie?' or 'Was that quite silvendy?' (though the sense of the question is vague to me) she falls into the trap, and the words explain themselves in her replies. Or maybe to-day she sees whither I am leading her, and such is her sensitiveness that she is quite hurt. The humour goes out of her face (to find bilbie in some more silvendy spot), and her reproachful eyes—but now I am on the arm of her chair, and we have made it up. Nevertheless, I shall get no more old-world Scotch out of her this forenoon, she weeds her talk determinedly, and it is as great a falling away as when the mutch gives place to the cap. (Barrie 2014, p. 41)

Barrie makes it clear throughout this passage how he is aware that his questioning and digging is an unwelcome experience for his mother, as he describes the change in her facial expressions, leaving the reader to wonder why he feels the necessity to leave his attempts only for the afternoon and not for good. Freud's *On Aphasia*, published in 1891, five years previous to the publication of *Margaret Ogilvy*, looked at aphasia, 'a neurological disorder where the patient is either unable to recognise words, or unable to pronounce them' (Snowden 2017, p. 36). In this book, he determined that language and speech hold an abundance of information on the human mind, as damages to the brain manifest themselves through language (Freud, 1953 p. 28). Barrie was aware of his mother's mental state, as he became a spectator whilst she suffered with her mental health for years. By challenging her on her use of specific words, he was attempting to establish more than a learning-experience surrounding his Scottish heritage; Barrie was creating a test for his mother in order to gain more insight into the way her brain was functioning, something that puzzled him so much for all of those years. The references to falling within the extract, symbolise the worrying degree of decline that had already occurred,

which he discovered through the 'trap' he set up for her.

The closing paragraphs of the memoir depict a scene of grief and angst, as both Barrie's mother and sister die within three days of each other. Although he had devoted the book to Margaret Ogilvy, it was the death of his sister that brought him to the floor, 'it was the other room I entered first, and it was by my sister's side that I fell upon my knees. The rounded completeness of a woman's life that was my mother's had not been for her. She would not have it at the price' (Barrie 2014, p. 76). Here, in adulthood, Barrie is once again attending the funeral of a person deprived of the chance to reach maturity, let alone old age, as the book begins with the death of a child, and ends with the death of a young adult. The presence of these references to falling, reminds the reader of the inevitability of death, a theme that engulfs the memoir. The realism that surrounds *Margaret Ogilvy* ensures fantastical elements are omitted due to the severity of their sufferings. Thus, the balance of fantasy and reality is uneven, as Barrie descends into a stream of recollected memories, where life's complications regularly interrupt the therapeutic use of imagination. His use of flight becomes a symbolic manifestation of the extent of the emotional trauma he endured, as the wings stand as a figurative route of escape from the rooms in which two of the women he cared deeply about died. The occurrence of such horrors became too much to bear for Barrie, and his future novels began to focus on the state of youth, as children are predominantly protected from the immeasurable impact that accompanies death.

Like the patent oneiric patterns in Barrie's writing, the occurrence of flying accompanies these younger characters within each book. In *Sentimental Tommy*, as the protagonist is followed through childhood, the references to flight start to appear, proving once again, that the marvellous elements of life thrive in childhood, when the imagination is in its most vibrant stage:

> It was a point of honor with all the boys he knew to pretend that the policeman was after them. To gull the policeman into thinking all was well they blackened their faces and wore their jackets inside out; their occupation was a constant state of readiness to fly from him, and when he tramped out of sight, unconscious of their existence, they emerged from dark places and spoke in exultant whispers. Tommy had been proud to join them, but he now resented their going on in this way; he felt that he alone had the right to fly from the law. And once at least while he was flying something happened to him that he was to remember better, far better, than his mother's face. (Barrie 2007 p. 26)

Flying represents a form of transport, a route of escape. In this quote from the novel, childhood, imagination, the unconscious, escapism and flight are all mentioned within a few sentences of each other, solidifying the connection they each possess with one another. As Freudian theory suggests, the significance of flight stands for the individual becoming elevated to a place where he or she can escape anxieties and burdens (Freud 2010, p. 405), which is depicted in this extract, as Tommy not only flies away from his responsibilities, but he also expresses his right to do so, an opportunity no adult could emulate.

As Tommy grows older, flight becomes predominantly a function attributed to others, and he seldom describes himself as 'flying' as he used to when he was a child. A connection is drawn on the ability to fly between both *Tommy and Grizel* and *The Little White Bird,* with both novels underlining the fuel that enables it – faith. *The Little White Bird* explains that without faith, the ability to fly will affect the individual's capability, 'it is a blessing that he did not know for otherwise he would have lost faith in his power to fly and the moment you doubt whether you can fly you cease for ever to be able to do it' (Barrie 1930, p. 55). In *Tommy and Grizel*, the imaginary elements reappear when flight is mentioned, as a lark gains the power to speak to its offspring. Again, faith and determination are demonstrated by the young character of the extract, even when the mother loses interest:

> When the baby tried to leap, it fell on its back … 'Now teach me to hop up,' the little lark said, meaning that it wanted to fly; and the mother tried to do that also, but in vain; she could soar up, up, up bravely, but could not explain how she did it. This distressed her very much… 'Wait till the sun comes out after rain,' she said, half remembering. 'What is sun? What is rain?' the little bird asked. 'If you cannot teach me to fly, teach me to sing.' 'When the sun comes out after rain,' the mother replied, 'then you will know how to sing.' The rain came, and glued the little bird's wings together. 'I shall never be able to fly nor to sing,' it wailed... 'The sun has come out after the rain,' it trilled. 'Thank you, sun; thank you, thank you! Oh, mother, did you hear me? I can sing!' And it floated up, up, up, crying, 'Thank you, thank you, thank you!' to the sun. 'Oh, mother, do you see me? I am flying!' And being but a baby, it soon was gasping, but still it trilled the same ecstasy, and when it fell panting to earth it still trilled, and the distracted mother called to it to take breath or it would die, but it could not stop. 'Thank you, thank you, thank you!' it sang to the sun till its little heart burst. (Barrie 2009, pp. 79-80)

The baby lark gains its wings, however, it repeatedly thanks the sun for its part in the process of flying, showing the bird had not gained its own faith in order to fly, which resulted in its falling to the ground, as the sun cannot stay out forever. Hence, the emphasis is once again placed on the power of the imagination. Freud claims the significance lies behind:

> The aversion on the part of the memory to remembering anything which is connected with unpleasant experience and which would revive this unpleasantness by a reproduction … this intention of avoiding unpleasantness in recollections of other psychic acts, the psychic flight from unpleasantness. (Freud 2015, p. 46)

Thus, Barrie draws attention to the advantages of faith and imagination, elucidating that although death is inevitable for everyone, there are ways to make the journey more pleasurable, like the little bird being in complete happiness before death. Once again, the ability to fly is closely associated with the bird's mother, however, the mother could not stop the bird from dying. Perhaps this story of the little bird inspired Barrie to compose a stand-alone novel two years later, *The Little White Bird*, which is not only laden with the narrative of an active

imagination, but also tells of restrictions when the ability to fly is limited after the iron bars keep the children from entering their homes. These barriers keep Barrie away from the rooms in which his mother and sister died, but they also set him free from the exhausting task of taking care of his mother, a task that cost him his childhood, so there are complex feelings and desires involved here, feelings and desires which the conscious mind may refuse to confront, repress and deny.

Freud further develops his theory of the instinctual impulse that causes an individual to attempt to escape their uncomfortable feelings in *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*, stating, 'defensive processes are the psychical correlative of the flight reflex and perform the task of preventing the generation of unpleasure from internal sources' (Freud 1990, p. 204). As referred to previously in Chapter 2, throughout his novels, Barrie exhibits a recurring anxiety about the concept of marriage and the societal conventions that accompany it. In *Tommy and Grizel*, during a conversation between the pair, Grizel prompts Tommy to address the idea of marriage and love and his perception of what the words mean to him; however, whilst Tommy lies to her, he finds it hard to mask his true feelings, '"I want to be married above all else on earth," he said imploringly; but his face betrayed him' (Barrie 2009, p. 199). His facial expressions urge Grizel to probe him more, asking him whether he truly loves her, to which Tommy replies with his insight on love:

> 'That is how others would put it, I suppose,' he replied. 'I believe they would be wrong. I think I love you in my own way; but I thought I loved you in their way, and it is the only way that counts in this world of theirs. It does not seem to be my world. I was given wings, I think, but I am never to know that I have left the earth until I come flop upon it with an arrow through them. I crawl and wriggle here, and yet' he laughed harshly 'I believe I am rather a fine fellow when I am flying!' (Barrie 2009, p. 199)

This passage addresses Barrie's hopes and fears within six sentences; it highlights the pressure

to conform to specific social expectations, and the realisation that no matter how hard one tries to escape, the weight of the world always ensures one's flight is only temporary. Here, the arrow is a metaphor for society, and the wings represent his freedom to love as he chooses, with whom he chooses. He highlights the enlightenment that occurs when he flies, as he has the ability to access his true identity to its fullest, 'a fine fellow' hidden behind the façade of keeping up with appearances.

Throughout the novel, wings are mentioned in correlation with one specific type of feeling experienced by the individual in various circumstances. Nevertheless, the wings that allow Tommy to embrace freedom, are aided by Grizel's untiring interest in him. As long as Grizel appears to exhibit love and admiration for him, he will continue to stay off the radar within his society, as no one will be suspicious about his lack of direction in terms of marriage and commitment, and in turn, this will allow him to channel the 'fine fellow' that he knows he can be. However, this too carries its own burdens:

> 'You have to reproach yourself with wanting me to love you.'
> She paused a moment to let him say, if he dared, that he had not done that, when she would have replied instantly, 'You know you did.' He could have disabused her, but it would have been cruel, and so on this subject, as ever, he remained silent.
> 'But that is not what I have been trying to prove,' she continued. 'You know as well as I that the cause of this unhappiness has been what you call your wings.' (Barrie 2009, p. 79)

Thus, the wings that allow Barrie to fly from 'unpleasure from internal sources' (Freud 1990, p. 204), are simultaneously the cause of the same type of feelings for Grizel, as he chose to pretend that the pair shared a mutual love for each other in the hopes that it would lead to a release from the burdens of society. Once again, Barrie utilises the ideals of childhood fantasies, where flight becomes the route to a consciousness free from woes and struggles, as his wings offer his thoughts the ability to 'soar to eternity' (Barrie 2009, p. 110), but unfortunately, reality

always has the ability to force his wings to 'slip to the floor' (Barrie 2009, p. 210).

As flight presented itself in the majority of Barrie's work, it seemed to gain momentum, as the plots of his later novels and plays began to revolve around the activity, 'it is the fairies who teach him to fly without wings, and now and again he flies home to watch his mother weeping for her lost child, and is moved by her tears; but always the freedom of the Gardens calls him back' (Birkin 2003, p. 150). With the mention of wings, freedom is never too far away, and Peter Pan becomes Barrie's avatar of ultimate autonomy in many ways. Firstly, his wings represent a version of freedom and independence that cannot be accessed under the weight of adult responsibilities, as Stirling claims Peter represents 'an escapist fantasy of flight from responsibilities' (Stirling 2012, p. 48). Peter's wings are also a symbol of rejection of authority, as he utilises his wings as a pathway to rebellion, '"are you expecting me to fly away with you?" "Of course; that is why I have come"' (Barrie 2012, p. 111). Finally, Peter Pan embodies eternal youth and immortality, allowing Barrie to access a place where he can avoid the emotional and physical changes that accompany growing old.

In *The Little White Bird*, as has been shown, the narrator, Captain W, describes his encounters with a boy named David of whom he is extremely fond, yet his mother Mary also becomes the subject of scrutiny and scorn, as he claims that he has 'no desire to meet the woman', and uses adjectives such as 'poor' and 'deluded' (Barrie 2019, p. 5) to describe her on the first page of the novel. Again, the fixation with mothers appears in another of Barrie's novels, and this time, the tone is one of sheer pessimism and contempt, underlying the complexity of his maternal feelings which he may have denied in life, but which surface in his fictional text. The common theme that connects all of these scenarios revolving around the relationship with mothers, is the element of control. Just like Barrie could not control his own childhood being taken away, Captain W watches in resentment as he realises that he cannot save David when he is behind closed doors within his home. He focuses on David's mother,

assuming that her role will only cause the same turmoil he endured for her own child. This resentment escalates, and soon the reader can see Captain W's malice stems from a place of jealousy, as he has no children of his own, and thus, cannot fulfil the role of chief protector and furthermore, has no offspring through which he could relive his own childhood traumas, very like Barrie himself. He can see that David is too pure for this world, which leads to his descriptions of Kensington Gardens:

> He asked, sparkling, whether I meant that he would still be a bird flying about in the Kensington Gardens. David knows that all children in our part of London were once birds in the Kensington Gardens; and that the reason there are bars on nursery windows and a tall fender by the fire is because very little people sometimes forget that they have no longer wings, and try to fly away through the window or up the chimney. (Barrie 2019, p. 16)

The image of iron bars and a tall fender symbolises the feeling of imprisonment that Barrie claims follows him through adulthood. The 'very little people' (Barrie 2019, p. 16) have an underlying autobiographical tone, with Barrie himself only reaching a few inches over 5 feet in height in adulthood (Moffat 2012, p. 166), and in appearance resembling a child, which led to him finding it hard to find his place amongst other adults. Although small in stature, he soon came to the realisation that it was not physicality that weighed him down mid-flight, rather it was essentially the development of his maturity levels and mental growth that tied his wings together.

Freud speaks about the connection between birds and flying and their significance when they occur in a dream on several occasions. He emphasises the importance of looking at each situation separately, claiming not all meanings can be derived from the same source. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, he discusses various different patients' dreams and linked them to a desire that the specific individual could not fulfil whilst awake:

> This material, then, consisting of sensations of movement of similar kinds and derived

> from the same source, is used to represent dream-thoughts of every possible sort. Dreams of flying or floating in the air (as a rule, pleasurably toned) require the most various interpretations; with some people these interpretations have to be of an individual character, whereas with others they may even be of a typical kind. One of my women patients used very often to dream that she was floating at a certain height over the street without touching the ground. She was very short, and she dreaded the contamination involved in contact with other people. Her floating dream fulfilled her two wishes, by raising her feet from the ground and lifting her head into a higher stratum of air. (Freud 2010, p. 404)

Firstly, the analysis of this dream can be connected to Barrie, as his height was a significant feature in his life, attracting looks from passers-by. Although there are no grounds to believe he vocalised a wish to be taller, it can be assumed he had experienced such thoughts at some stages of his life, pondering how different his life might have been if he had grown more; possibly allowing him to blend into the background and thus, escaping unwanted attention. Furthermore, the narrators in *The Little White Bird*, and *Better Dead*, who both bare striking similarities to Barrie himself, express their disdain for society, suggesting that they mirrored the author's deepest inner contemplations. Freud continues by analysing other types of dreams about flying:

> In other women I have found that flying dreams expressed a desire 'to be like a bird'; while other dreamers became angels during the night because they had not been called angels during the day. The close connection of flying with the idea of birds explains how it is that in men flying dreams usually have a grossly sensual meaning and we shall not be surprised when we hear that some dreamer or other is very proud of his powers of flight. (Freud 2010, p. 404)

The connection here is evident, with Barrie's novel-title devoted to a bird, while the book itself is replete with references to birds, 'no sooner do you cast eyes on him than you are thinking of birds' (Barrie 2019, p. 6), proving that Barrie expresses the desire to 'be like a bird' on an ongoing basis. His creation of Peter Pan in *The Little White Bird*, and later development of his

story in its own book entitled *Peter Pan*, is preoccupied with the power of flight and the ease with which the skill comes to Peter. Freud's suggestion that flying, representing a sensual feeling, combined with the connection formed in Barrie's work between flight and childhood, may be a metaphorical form of transportation for Barrie, signifying the feeling he gets when he reaches a place where he can access a higher form of consciousness.

Elaborating on the accessibility to this heightened sense of consciousness, Peter repeatedly emphasises the significance of flying, with it becoming the only thing that allows him the experience of 'the accompaniment of agreeable feelings' (Freud 2010, p. 288). In *The Little White Bird*, as Peter's adventures begin to amplify, it becomes more than a feeling of pleasure, instead it now represents the path to home:

> Now, except by flying, no one can reach the island in the Serpentine, for the boats of humans are forbidden to land there, and there are stakes round it, standing up in the water, on each of which a bird-sentinel sits by day and night. It was to the island that Peter now flew to put his strange case before old Solomon Caw, and he alighted on it with relief, much heartened to find himself at last at home, as the birds call the island. (Barrie 2019, p. 94)

Although the novel tells the story of a boy who flies away from home, where his parents reside, when Peter finds himself unable to return to his mother, it is amongst the birds that Peter is truly at home. Thus, the concept of home is thrown into question here. Peter follows a feeling instead of the conventional meaning of a word, and although he is adamant regarding his intention to return to where he was born, he repeatedly procrastinates, suggesting that he was experiencing an underlying apprehension towards leaving the freedom he gained when he flew away, 'you must not think that he meditated flying away and never coming back. He had quite decided to be his mother's boy, but hesitated about beginning to-night: "I promise to come back," he said solemnly and meant it, too' (Barrie 2019, pp. 110-112). Once again, this

illustrates Barrie's constant attempt to break free from social constructs. Flying is the link between unhappiness and happiness, regardless of what society leads you to believe, and without it, he would be trapped in 'his old home' (Barrie 2019, p. 112), the place where grief resides in each room where his mother and sister took their last breaths, on the other side of the iron bars, forced to grow up in a society towards which he feels resentment. Consequently, his wings release him from the immeasurable grief and societal pressure that regularly consumes him.

Whilst Peter himself is renowned for his infinite innocence, *The Little White Bird* takes every opportunity available to remind the reader of the apparent connection between flying and childhood, reemphasising the endless possibilities that the juvenile imagination can create. Allison B. Kavey in her publication, *Second Star to the Right*, addresses the ostensible dissimilarity between how his characters in adulthood deal with real life situations, in contrast with the actions of children, claiming 'that distinction between the imaginary world of childhood and the dangers of acting it out in the real world must have enforced itself upon Barrie's imagination' (Kavey & Friedman 2009, p. 71). There are many examples of this in this novel, with Peter flying to and from serious situations, whilst becoming distracted by minute problems on the way, 'he said he would often fly in to see her. The first thing he would do would be to hug her. No, he would alight on the water-jug first, and have a drink' (Barrie 2019, p. 17). Although Peter claims he misses his mother terribly, the urge to embrace her is interrupted by his thirst, which is more a primary somatic need as opposed to a more social connection with his mother. Repeatedly, Peter's journey home takes a detour as he continues to enjoy the feeling he gets mid-flight:

> It was so delicious that instead of flying straight to his old home he skimmed away over St. Paul's to the Crystal Palace and back by the river and Regent's Park, and by the time he reached his mother's window he had quite made up his mind that his second wish should be to become a bird. (Barrie 2019, p. 112)

This exemplifies the short attention span that accompanies innocence, paired with the ability to access freedom, and both act as emotional barriers, ensuring that he never experiences an overwhelming negative feeling of any sort, such as guilt, worry or anxiety, all of which can encompass and darken the mind of an adult. Once again, Peter's childish characteristics ensure that he avoids the disappointment Barrie experienced when he became consumed by the pressure to protect his mother's mental health from deteriorating. Escape, in all its forms, is an essential trope in Barrie's writing, and in the makeup of his most significant characters.

Flight, however, is not always associated with pleasurable experiences. Wings are commonly attributed to a person whose life has ended, with the common colloquialism 'they have gained their wings,' recited as words of comfort to the family of the deceased, an image derived from the images of Christian iconology of angels, all of whom are winged (Didreon 1891 p. 92). Freud also acknowledged this connection, writing about another of his patients' dreams:

> In none of my women patients, to take an example, have I failed to come upon this dream of the death of a brother or sister, which tallies with an increase in hostility … Another dream, however, occurred to her, which ostensibly had no connection with the topic—a dream which she had first dreamt when she was four years old and at that time the youngest of the family, and which she had dreamt repeatedly since: A whole crowd of children—all her brothers, sisters and cousins of both sexes—were romping in a field. Suddenly they all grew wings, flew away and disappeared. She had no idea what this dream meant; but it is not hard to recognize that in its original form it had been a dream of the death of all her brothers and sisters, and had been only slightly influenced by the censorship. (Freud 2010, p. 271)

As previous chapters have discussed, the death of his brother David at a young age was an experience that shaped the rest of Barrie's life. From that moment on, he struggled with the concept of death, as it resurfaced throughout his lifetime, with many people around him dying

tragic and untimely deaths. Freud's quote depicts wings as a symbol of death, escape and endings, as the children all disappear once their wings are grown. With wings being referred to as a source of comfort in a moment of trauma, Barrie's experience of grief as a child caused him to struggle to accept this offer of consolation that often accompanied his brother's death. In order to deal with this, Barrie's fusion of the ability to fly with the sense of being eternally young can be seen as a coping mechanism, acknowledging the negative connotations and transforming them into something positive, so that his character Peter gains control of where the wings can take him from The Neverland to the Darling household, a luxury that his brother David could not afford, as his wings only transported him away from his life on earth.

This element of control became a cosmic force within Barrie's work, mirroring the argument this thesis proposes, and showing how he utilises words, characters, tropes, adventures and stories in order to regain a sense of power that can be lost when one is immersed into the reality of life as they grow older. In *The Little White Bird*, the wings are the physical force that aids escapism, whilst faith is the intrinsic belief that grants the ability to fly:

> Despairing of the fairies, he resolved to consult the birds, but now he remembered, as an odd thing, that all the birds on the weeping beech had flown away when he alighted on it, and though that had not troubled him at the time, he saw its meaning now. Every living thing was shunning him. Poor little Peter Pan, he sat down and cried, and even then he did not know that, for a bird, he was sitting on his wrong part. It is a blessing that he did not know, for otherwise he would have lost faith in his power to fly, and the moment you doubt whether you can fly, you cease forever to be able to do it. The reason birds can fly and we can't is simply that they have perfect faith, for to have faith is to have wings. (Barrie 2019, p. 71)

Although the novel refers to Peter as a bird, Barrie emphasises that the characteristics and capabilities of a typical bird are not necessarily endowed to all of its kind. The control lies within the individual's faith in their power to enhance their innate proficiencies, paralleling Barrie's attitude towards adulthood, and enabling the reader to access a place of comfort and

pleasure by submerging themselves in his novel that metaphorically takes them back to the bliss of childhood naivety. In *Civilization and its Discontents*, Freud states, 'just as a satisfaction of instinct spells happiness for us, so severe suffering is caused for us if the external world lets us starve, if it refuses to sate our needs' (Freud 2002, p. 26), stressing the impactful influence society has on an individual. He continues to claim 'one may therefore hope to be freed from a part of one's sufferings by influencing the instinctual impulses' (Freud 2002, p. 26), emphasising the importance of establishing and retaining this sense of control. It can therefore be concluded that Barrie has acknowledged this path towards coping with external stimuli, as he controls 'the elements of higher psychical agencies' (Freud 2002, p. 26), by setting up a defence mechanism that is facilitated by the faculty of belief. By doing so, the ability to believe, an inherent part of being a child, becomes a source of elation away from the sufferings of daily life, allowing one to achieve a heightened sense of consciousness.

In the same Gardens that facilitate and encourage the self-belief needed to fly, the tone of the story picks up, with the adjectives becoming light-hearted and pleasant, instilling a feeling of comfort in the reader. Captain W watches, in awe at the tranquillity that occurs when the adults are nowhere to be seen:

> Quite the prettiest sight in the Gardens is when the babies stray from the tree where the nurse is sitting and are seen feeding the birds, not a grownup near them. It is first a bit to me and then a bit to you, and all the time such a jabbering and laughing from both sides of the railing. They are comparing notes and inquiring for old friends, and so on; but what they say I cannot determine, for when I approach they all fly away. (Barrie 2019, p. 16)

The juxtaposition between the previous use of negative language, and the now hopeful and optimistic point of view, is instigated by one main difference: namely, the presence of an adult. Both the babies and birds are described as enjoying themselves, full of innocence and free of cares and woes. Whilst discussing the practice of transference in psychotherapy, which

involves the patient redirecting their emotions, usually towards a different person, Pamela Thurschwell states that 'patients acted out childhood emotions through the relationship with the analyst, initially not realising that they were imitating old patterns' (Thurschwell 2000, p. 39).

As it has been previously insinuated, Barrie expresses his thoughts and desires through his books, whilst also exhibiting autobiographical tones through some of the protagonists in his novels. Therefore, when Captain W approaches the birds and they fly away, he is accessing his inner child that would love nothing more than to join the laughter and games. He even tells the reader how they can catch a glimpse saying, 'you leave your empty perambulator under the trees and watch from a distance, you will see the birds boarding it and hopping about from pillow to blanket in a twitter of excitement' (Barrie 2019, p 12). For a minute, he is a child again. He imitates old patterns, forgetting he is now one of those adults that needs to hide under the trees or sneak around to avoid calling a halt to the enjoyment. However, when he sees the birds displaying their ability to fly away from him, he realises the freedom he once knew is now exclusively theirs.

The novel, which begins absorbed with pessimism and burdened by the troubles of daily life in a demanding and unfriendly society, exhibits hints of optimism as the chapters develop. However, it is ultimately transformed by the end:

> She spoke in a lower voice as if David must not hear. 'I had only one pretty thought for the book,' she said, 'I was to give it a happy ending.' She said this so timidly that I was about to melt to her when she added with extraordinary boldness, 'The little white bird was to bear an olive-leaf in its mouth … 'It is quite young for a man,' she said brazenly. 'My father' said I, 'was not forty-seven when he died, and I remember thinking him an old man.' 'But you don't think so now, do you?' she persisted, 'you feel young occasionally, don't you? Sometimes when you are playing with David in the Gardens your youth comes swinging back, does it not?' (Barrie 2019, pp. 195-196)

Captain W's change in heart, from despising Mary A, to developing a close bond with her, and unearthing his deepest desires, is a metaphor for Barrie's life. Barrie's relationship with his own wife Mary Ansell was questioned due to the apparent platonic nature of their connection, which caused him to develop resentment towards her at first, which materialised in his dreams, 'he knew full well that he was temperamentally unsuited to married life' (Birkin 2003, p. 73). However, his novels, and the ending to *The Little White Bird*, show that he acknowledges that his resentment was displaced in order to cope with the scrutiny that surrounded him, 'some sort of relief had to be found and the mechanism of displacement which so constantly takes part in the origin of obsessional jealousy offered the most immediate mitigation' (Freud 2015, p. 156). Just as Mary Ansell can 'give it a happy ending', so too can he attempt to make his own happiness. The major turning point within the novel seems to revolve around the introduction of Peter Pan, as Barrie not only creates a route to happiness, with the boy who would forever be able to fly, and forever remain a boy: it is a novel devoted to Peter's permanent youth.

In the first few pages of the novel, Barrie draws attention to the cognitive processes that occur in the psyche of a child, highlighting the complexities that can be uncovered by juxtaposing it to a map that has a trail that never ends:

> I don't know whether you have ever seen a map of a person's mind. Doctors sometimes draw maps of other parts of you … but catch them trying to draw a map of a child's mind which is not only confused but keeps going round all the time. (Barrie 2012, p. 7)

Before *Peter Pan* was written, Freud was publishing theories on the mind, which also referred to the intricacies involved in such a study. This metaphorical 'map of a child's mind' (Ridley 2016, p. 92), describes what The Neverland means to each one of the Darling children:

> Of course, The Neverlands vary a good deal. John's, for instance, had a lagoon with flamingoes flying over it at which John was shooting, while Michael, who was very small, had a flamingo with lagoons flying over it. John lived in a boat turned upside

> down on the sands, Michael in a wigwam, Wendy in a house of leaves deftly sewn together. John had no friends, Michael had friends at night, Wendy had a pet wolf forsaken by its parents, but on the whole The Neverlands have a family resemblance, and if they stood still in a row you could say of them that they have each other's nose, and so forth. On these magic shores children at play are for ever beaching their coracles. We too have been there; we can still hear the sound of the surf, though we shall land no more. (Barrie 2012, p. 8)

Here, each child is listing their fantasies, with both Michael and John including flight in some form within their The Neverland. Wendy, the oldest of the Darling children opted for a more realistic version, mirroring the idea of the loss of imagination as children grow older. In the case of one of his patients, Anna O, Freud described her by saying, 'while everyone thought she was attending, she was living through fairy tales in her imagination, but she was always on the spot when she was spoken to' (Freud et al 2001, p, 22). Again, Freud establishes a correlation between imagination and reality, like the children who recall their The Neverlands, but who also simultaneously remember their family ties. Whilst Michael and John utilise flight in literal terms, both Anna O and Wendy have come to the realisation that the metaphorical flight through their minds is the only mode of escape they can access when reality is constantly looming. As the children continue to mature, they gradually come to the realisation that the aptly named The Neverland can only ever last within their minds, as it will never be a real land.

Barrie's *Peter Pan* utilises the first two chapters in order to provide details about each character, which not only sets the scene for the rest of the novel; it also provides a clear depiction of status of each individual. However, in this novel, the criteria for status does not depend on their social class, or how on how highly they are regarded within society. Instead, Barrie establishes a distinction between the age of the characters, calling the adults Mr. and Mrs. Darling, whilst the children are referred to by their first names. After two chapters of setting the scene, the adventures of Peter and the Darling children commence, with the first major

interaction between them involving the fascination around the ability to fly, 'I'll teach you … I'll teach you how to jump on the wind's back, and then away we go' (Barrie 2012, p. 42). Michael Darling questions the logistics of his incapability, realising that regardless of his obvious advantage intellectually, Peter was still far superior in this circumstance, 'not one of them could fly an inch, though even Michael was in words of two syllables, and Peter did not know A from Z' (Barrie 2012, p. 46).

As the children realise the ability would not come easily to them, Peter tells them 'you just think lovely wonderful thoughts, and they lift you up in the air' (Barrie 2012, p. 46). Immediately after Peter tells them this, the children begin to fly. Thus, at the first chance he gets, Barrie highlights the very special nature of flying in his fictive universe, separating it from other assumptions, whilst ensuring he connects flight to happiness, implying that stress and worries can both mentally and physically weigh you down, and consequently, the little birds are transformed into adults who can no longer access the feelings that 'lift you up in the air' like you can as a child. The chapter ends before the next aptly entitled 'The Flight' begins, with the sentence, 'Mr. and Mrs. Darling and Nana rushed into the nursery too late. The birds were flown' (Barrie 2012, p. 48). Here, the children are now called birds once again, like the birds the narrator watched Kensington Gardens in *The Little White Bird*, and like the birds that reoccurred in the dreams of Freud's patients, free to grow wings and disappear (Freud 2010, p. 271).

Thus, 'The Flight' begins, and 'so great were the delights of flying that they wasted time circling round church spires or any other tall objects on the way that took their fancy' (Barrie 2012, p. 49). In *Wit and its Relation to the Unconscious*, Freud once again, addresses the theory of flight as a defence process:

> The defense processes are the psychic correlates of the flight reflex and follow the task of guarding against the origin of pain from inner sources; in fulfilling this task they serve the psychic function as an automatic adjustment, which finally proves harmful and therefore must be subjected to the control of the conscious thinking. (Freud 2014,

p. 367)

If flight is an example of a defence mechanism, then Barrie utilised it for the characters of *Peter Pan* as a physical method of self-preservation, and therefore, also as a metaphorical defence for both himself and the readers. During their adventures mid-flight, each of the Darling children find themselves questioning Peter at one stage or another, 'Wendy argued, "how can we expect that he will go on remembering us?"' (Barrie 2012, p. 53). Peter remains burden-free, and nimble throughout, whereas the children find themselves asking Peter to save them as their wings fail. Here, Barrie contrasts the two types of people: the ones with eternal youth, whose wings never disappoint him, and the children who grow older by the day whose wings become more unreliable as the days pass. Flight is consequently, a more dependable form of defence for Peter, showing that the impending intrusion of reality is an inescapable part of growth.

Freud broadened his studies on the occurrence of flight in dreams, deconstructing the incidence in order to further analyse the meaning behind it. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud claimed that he, and other psychoanalysts such as Dr Paul Federn and Mourly Vold, mutually acknowledged that flying in dreams can mean more than the route to freedom, it can also symbolise a sexual feeling on the part of the dreamer:

> The close connection of flying with the idea of birds explains how it is that in men flying dreams usually have a grossly sensual meaning; and we shall not be surprised when we hear that some dreamer or other is very proud of his powers of flight … Dr. Paul Federn has put forward the attractive theory that a good number of these flying dreams are dreams of erection … Mourly Vold, a sober-minded investigator of dreams and one who is disinclined to interpretation of any kind, also supports the erotic interpretation of flying or floating dreams. (Freud 2010, p. 405)

With Freud's theories becoming prevalent in Europe, including the studies of psychosexual development, Barrie created a boy who would never complete the five stages; thus, the ease of

flight for him became a metaphor for the sensual elation he experienced, whilst the other children progressed without much time to be stationary in any one stage for too long. This particular theory materialised in more ways than through the mode of flight, which will be discussed further in the following chapter.

## Chapter 5 The Role of Sexual Maturation in the Eternally Innocent

While J. M. Barrie was writing about the various manifestations of underlying anxieties surrounding the social construct of marriage, and the resultant pressure on forming nuclear families, Sigmund Freud was developing and contributing to various theories on the role of sexual development of children, and how this process affects them through their lives and into adulthood. Thus, the interruption of the sexual development of a child in Freudian terms means Barrie's childhood experiences hold an immeasurable weight of significance when analysing the adult he became. This chapter will look at the Freudian theories that allow a more in-depth look at Barrie, including theories such as the Oedipus Complex, the pleasure principle and psychosexual development, all of which were in their infancy in the 1890s and developed in later years. In *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, Freud discussed the five psychosexual stages of development: oral, anal, phallic, latent and genital; each of which represents an erogenous zone for the instincts of the id driven by the pleasure principle. Furthermore, Freud pondered on how the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of each stage contributes to the human personality, and how fixations that occur within one specific stage can cause various kinds of personality disorders whilst also becoming the foundation for how sexual relationships are sustained in adulthood, 'psychic forces develop which later act as inhibitions on the sexual life and narrow its direction like dams' (Freud & Brill 1938, p. 470).

Whilst these psychoanalytical theories began to sweep across Europe, Barrie was prolifically writing and publishing novels and plays, some of which displayed an undeniable and pioneering grasp on the unconscious mind, with Sarah Green describing them as 'among the most interesting treatments of artistic sexuality in the period' (Green 2017, p. 185). Rosalind Ridley, a psychologist who spent some time looking into Peter Pan's character, in an interview with *The Guardian*, claimed, 'in many cases, his accurate observation of animal and

human behaviour precedes the analysis of these behaviours by the scientific community' (Ridley 2016). These observations, although most likely scientifically influenced, were driven mainly by personal experiences, suggesting that Barrie's perspective on what is now called psychoanalysis before it had a name, was the result of both a conscious personal reflection and a subconscious access to a form of therapy through writing, after a life of struggles and misfortune.

In *Better Dead*, his earliest novel, the protagonist Andrew mentions his love interest within the first few lines, questioning the sexual connection between the pair, 'she puts me in an awkward position. How do I know that I love her?' … 'What I fear,' he said, 'is that we have known each other too long. Perhaps my feeling for Clarrie is only brotherly' (Barrie 2018, pp. 2-3). Similarly, Tommy, in *Tommy and Grizel*, maintains a relationship with Grizel, yet once again, the mutuality of their bond is queried when marriage is mentioned, 'I want to be married above all else on earth,' he said imploringly; but his face betrayed him still, and she demanded the truth, and he was forced to tell it' (Barrie 2007, p. 199). Captain W, in *The Little White Bird*, in comparison, displays no form of sexual interest in a woman or man throughout the novel, showing a recurring theme of uncertainty when it comes to matters of love and romance.

The similarities in attitudes and values between the characters in both *Better Dead* published in 1887, and *Tommy and Grizel* in 1900, mirror Barrie's personal development as he married Mary Ansell in 1894, while evidently still unsure as to whether marital life was a commitment he should make. Writing about Barrie's hostility towards marriage, Birkin claims:

> On the one hand he was 'in love' with Mary— as much as he felt he was ever likely to be with a woman—and she was certainly in love with him. On the other hand, he knew full well that he was temperamentally unsuited to married life. (Birkin 2003, p. 73)

These recurring patterns in his novels, along with his previously mentioned article in the

*Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, convey a message of ambiguity regarding the relationships he established with women. The parallel stance of Captain W, however, shows a change in Barrie; as the societal expectations that had once clouded his judgement start to disappear, he begins to realise the relationships he had were, and would always be, nonsexual in nature. Possibly due to the realisation that without the pressures of society, he may have chosen to refrain from a committed relationship, Barrie created Peter Pan, someone who fails to be affected by the weight of expectations. Thus, Barrie's work stands as a framework for the analysis of his own life, as his marriage to Mary was coming to an end in the early 1900s, with his divorce finalising in 1909.

The apparent indifference towards marriage that appears throughout Barrie's life and is undeniable in his article 'My Ghastly Dream' 1887, can be attributed to more than just the apprehension caused by the pressures of society. Freudian theory summarises the five psychosexual stages as indicative of the zones of the body that the child recognises as a source of pleasure. With the progression from each stage comes the potential development of a healthy personality; however, a delay in a particular stage can negatively impact that person through adulthood:

> The stronger the fixations in the process of development prove to be, the more readily will the function evade external difficulties by a regression back to those fixations, and the less capable will the fully developed function be to withstand the hindrances that stand in the way of its exercise. (Freud 2015, p. 211)

Freud argues that prolonged fixations during a specific period can cause regression, where the individual returns during adulthood to attempt to satisfy the urges they failed to satiate during their childhood.

The death of Barrie's brother when he was six, according to Freud, meant he was coming to the end of the phallic stage and entering the latency phase, which encompasses

dormant sexual feelings. His mother, consumed by the grief she was experiencing after the death of her son David, withdrew herself from the world as she longed for her son to be back in her arms once again, thereby making Barrie feel unworthy of her affections. As discussed in previous chapters, he became fixated on his mother's well-being, leaving his childhood to one side to ensure she was taking her medication and keeping her spirits high by taking as many opportunities as possible to make her laugh, 'not only did she laugh then but again when I put the laugh down, so that though it was really one laugh with a tear in the middle I counted it as two' (Barrie 2014, p. 6). The result of the interruption in development in this stage lent itself to immaturity as an adult, where his relationships tended to repeat the types of relationships formed in childhood, centered around protection, care and affection and not based on a physical connection, as Thanatos, the death drive, overcomes Eros, the Life Instinct, in Barrie's unconscious (Freud 1961, pp. 32-33). Thus, the inability to hold stable relationships, which is not only evident through the study of Barrie's biography, but also through the characters he created within his novels, is an ongoing theme.

Barrie's complex relationship with his mother hovers over all of his work, from his memoir devoted to her, to the exploration of relationships held between mothers and their children in his fictional novels. With Freud developing his problematic theory on the Oedipus Complex in the early 1900s, it would be remiss not to explore the concept in relation to Barrie and his life. Freud described the Oedipus complex as a crucial part of the psychosexual development of a child:

> The son, even as a small child, begins to develop an especial tenderness for his mother, whom he considers as his own property, and feels his father to be a rival who puts into question his individual possession; and in the same manner the little daughter sees in her mother a person who is a disturbing element in her tender relationship with her father, and who occupies a position that she could very well fill herself. One learns from these observations to what early years these ideas extend back—ideas which we

> designate as the Oedipus-complex, because this myth realizes with a very slightly weakened effect the two extreme wishes which grow out of the situation of the son—to kill his father and take his mother to wife. (Freud 2015, pp. 128-129)

This quote becomes instrumental in understanding the detrimental impact a strained relationship between mother and son can have on the development of the child, as the feelings Freud refers to that are experienced by the child may not find their resolution. During his memoir, *Margaret Ogilvy*, Barrie reveals insightful details about his childhood, opening the novel with hearsay stories of the day he was born, and quickly progressing to when he was six and the moment the news of the traumatic death of his brother reached his family. Throughout, Barrie never strays far from the descriptions of his mother, from the texture of her face to her timid lips and blue eyes that taught him all he knew. He explains how all the details of his mother from before he turned six were relayed to him by others; however, from the day of the immeasurable loss in the family, he remembers every detail, 'but I speak from hearsay no longer; I knew my mother for ever now' (Barrie 2014, p. 3). Freud asserts that the Oedipus Complex forms during the child's third to sixth year, as the unconscious sexual connection to the mother deepens. The child resents the father at first, with overwhelming feelings of jealousy and insecurity coming to the surface. As the child nears the latency stage, they begin to identity with the father as a coping mechanism, and as development continues, the sexual desire once unconsciously experienced towards the mother is substituted with desire for other women.

Several of Barrie's works introduce the reader to a mother-son relationship, with examples of the boys at a young age trusting the stories their mothers tell them, about the times they were too young to remember, 'the young man then learnt from his mother that this object had been his favourite toy during his early childhood, though he himself had forgotten the fact' (Freud 2010, p. 212). With Barrie's fixation with his mother following him into adulthood, and taking his infamous assumed asexuality into account, Freudian theory would suggest that

Barrie's unresolved completion of the Oedipus Complex is the cause of his preoccupation with his mother, even after her death. Freud also suggests that this incompletion causes the individual to seek similar traits to their mother in their potential partners.

In his biography of Barrie, Andrew Birkin includes a section of one of Barrie's notebooks from 1892, which is about the relationship he shares with Mary Ansell. Here, speaking of himself in the third person, Barrie says, 'he feels for her & keeps the thing going on because doesn't want to make her miserable' (Birkin 2003, p. 68). This mirrors the scene in *Margaret Ogilvy,* where he dresses as his brother, mimicking his actions and copying his voice in a bid to comfort his mother. At a time in life where identity is assumed and the foundations of oneself for years to come are established and solidified, Barrie is lost in a world of make-believe, throwing his own identity into confusion as he assumes the role of his brother. This can be linked to the loss of identity in mothers during the early 1900s when their primary role was to produce offspring, as discussed by Yoo, as she says this can result in a deprivation of their independence and subjectivity (Yoo 2019, p. 392), and is possibly also relevant to Barrie's own mother's loss of identity during her time of grief. In both cases, Barrie is aware his actions are a temporary solution to a permanent problem; however, even in adulthood he has not reconsidered his decisions, showing the fixation that formed in childhood is a permanent feature of his subconscious.

However, this palpable fixation with mothers is not solely a feature of Barrie's memoir, as it also presents itself in his fictional novels. *Sentimental Tommy* mentions the word 'mother' on most of the pages, with the word appearing a total of 227 times in the novel that consists of a total of 281 pages. The beginning of the novel tells of Tommy's relationship with his mother, showing the respect he had for her, 'he never asked for anything; his mother had warned him against it, and he carried out her injunction with almost unnecessary spirit' (Barrie 2007, p. 2). Whilst his memoir depicted Barrie in a protective and almost possessive position when it came

to matters involving his mother, Tommy experiences the same thoughts as his creator, as a young girl approaches him on the steps near his mother's house:

> 'You had best go back,' he said. She did not budge, however, and his next attempt was craftier. 'My mother,' he assured her, 'ain't living here now;' but mother was a new word to the girl, and she asked gleefully, 'Oo have mother?' expecting him to produce it from his pocket. To coax him to give her a sight of it she said, plaintively, 'Me no have mother.'
>
> 'You won't not get mine,' replied Tommy doggedly. (Barrie 2007 p. 6)

Although Tommy's character may not excessively mimic Barrie himself to the extent that other characters do, there are undeniable connections established between the two from the first page of the novel. The narrator tells the reader in the opening sentence that Tommy is five years of age, and he has already experienced grief with his father passing away a few months previously, perhaps a nod towards Barrie's seemingly distant relationship with his father as he fails to mention his support, or lack of, during David's death in his writing, whilst his mother has a memoir devoted to her. As Tommy helps the young girl search for a mother, he is constantly on edge, afraid she will take his own mother from him, 'as long as his own mother was safe, it did not greatly matter to Tommy whom she chose' (Barrie 2007, p. 9). This uneasiness, shown in abundance throughout the pages, can be interconnected to the anxiety that Barrie experienced when his mother as he knew her, was taken from him at the tender age of six. By creating this innocent girl's character, once again, he establishes a sense of delayed fictional control, where Tommy can physically stop his mother from leaving, something Barrie spent years of his life trying to achieve in reality. Barrie's attempts to save his mother from the 'darkness' that 'hid him even from himself' (Barrie 2007, p. 11), are unsuccessful, but through words and fictitious scenarios, he can make them temporarily come true with the use of his imagination.

In Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams,* he wrote about a dream he had that involved the Three Fates, three women from ancient Greek mythology that ensured human beings

followed their destiny in life. He believed part of the dream stemmed from a lesson on life, given to him by his mother when he was six years old, coincidentally the same age that Barrie's life changed forever. The three women in his dream represent a form of hidden desire for Freud: one was the giver of life, one the nourisher and the other was a manifestation of childhood memories from that day he had the lesson with his mother:

> One of the Fates, then, was rubbing the palms of her hands together as though she was making dumplings: a queer occupation for a Fate, and one that cried out for an explanation. This was provided by another and earlier memory of my childhood. When I was six years old and was given my first lessons by my mother, I was expected to believe that we were all made of earth and must therefore return to earth. This did not suit me and I expressed doubts of the doctrine. My mother thereupon rubbed the palms of her hands together—just as she did in making dumplings, except that there was no dough between them—and showed me the blackish scales of epidermis produced by the friction as a proof that we were made of earth. My astonishment at this ocular demonstration knew no bounds. (Freud 2010, p. 226)

Later in his book, upon deep analysis of his dream he concludes, 'my dream of the Three Fates was clearly a hunger dream. But it succeeded in shifting the craving for nourishment back to a child's longing for his mother's breast' (Freud 2010, p. 252). Freud's dream became the culmination of his memories of his mother, and of any wishes he may have had regarding her maternal instinct, using the mythical stories to epitomise, and to a degree, thinly veil these desires. Barrie also veiled his own thoughts about his mother in his fiction, by writing about various kinds of mothers in his novels, aware of the pressing fact his mother's spirit left him when his brother's mind and body were taken too.

The continuing effects of the retardation of his sexual development and the incompletion of the Oedipus Complex also can be seen in *The Little White Bird*, as the shift to a fictitious novel from a memoir allows the narrator to speak of a mother-son relationship from

the perspective of a spectator, sharing his point of view including his reservations on the mother's competency. On the third page of the novel, Captain W delves deep under the exterior of these relationships, suggesting that no mother can hide her true feelings or desires, however hard she tries; her son will always be able to tease out the truth, even via a simple gaze:

> Heaven help all mothers if they be not really dears, for their boy will certainly know it in that strange short hour of the day when every mother stands revealed before her little son. That dread hour ticks between six and seven; when children go to bed later the revelation has ceased to come. He is lapt in for the night now and lies quietly there, madam, with great, mysterious eyes fixed upon his mother. He is summing up your day. Nothing in the revelations that kept you together and yet apart in play time can save you now; you two are of no age, no experience of life separates you; it is the boy's hour, and you have come up for judgment. 'Have I done well to-day, my son?' You have got to say it, and nothing may you hide from him; he knows all. (Barrie 2007, p. 3)

Not only does Captain W's speech extrapolate a valuable lesson from an everyday encounter, but it also happens between six and seven on the clock – during the sixth hour. Once again, the number six represents a pivotal moment where a life-experience shapes the individual's future path. The subtle interrogation by Captain W mirrors the piece from *Margaret Ogilvy* discussed previously in Chapter 4, where he challenges his mother on her memory of the old-Scotch dialect (Barrie 2014, p. 41). It forces the reader to wonder why Barrie repeatedly displays examples of placing his mother, and other mothers in his novels, under this kind of pressure, whilst entirely aware of the situations he is creating. In Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*, he discusses a case study where a patient of his refrained from sexual activity, and whilst analysing his unconscious thoughts, he discovered that the patient had failed to resolve the sexual feelings that occur during the Oedipus Complex, and thus, he repressed any sexual urges he felt due to the overwhelming shame he experienced, 'he awoke with a conviction of the reality of what he had dreamt and kept obstinately asking his mother for the second pear, and insisted that it was on the window-sill' (Freud 2010, p. 384). Barrie's obsessive interrogation

of mothers when 'he knows all' (Barrie 2007, p. 3) is correlative to Freud's case study, implying that the recurring event in both Barrie's memoir and his fictional novel stand as a symbol of his own unresolved Oedipus Complex.

Mirroring the questionable bonds in *The Little White Bird,* the first mention of the word 'mother' in *Tommy and Grizel* is deconstructive of the traditional family situation. Tommy shows the advantages of choice, using his own discretion to decide who he can call mother; 'Mother' was his nickname for her, and she delighted in the word. She lorded it over him as if he were her troublesome boy' (Barrie 2009, p. 33). Like the little girl for whom he helped pick a mother in *Sentimental Tommy,* he puts the same principal into practice for himself. He goes on to explain all the admirable qualities of the fictional mother he chose, when in reality, outside of his fictional writing, Barrie could not avoid the detrimental impact of his own mother's mental health on his development, 'at last he had found for nurse a woman who could follow his instructions literally, who understood that if he said five o'clock for the medicine the chap of six would not do as well' (Barrie 2009, p. 33). The reference to time here again mentions the number six, claiming that medicine scheduled for five o'clock failing to be administered before six would not suffice. The hint at this appointed 'mother's' ability to comprehend the consequences that may occur when there is a delay correlates with Barrie's realisation of how his own childhood was permanently halted at six years of age. It also is representative of Freud's theory of sexual development, as Barrie failed to progress through the five stages, suggesting that his fixation with his own mother perhaps caused a repressed feeling of resentment towards the way her health affected his childhood. This ultimately lead to his characters choosing mothers of their own in his novels, ensuring they will avoid the negative, albeit repressed, feelings which materialised for Barrie in his novels.

With Freud's theory on the psychosexual development of a child suggesting that the results of this process determine the personality the child possess in adulthood, the implication

is that the impact of an interrupted sexual development will be apparent, with many adults exhibiting personality traits that correlate with the stage at which their development was stunted. With his sixth year signalling the beginning of a culmination of repeated trauma, according to Freud, Barrie would have been entering the latent stage of his sexual development. Discussing this specific period of a child's life, Freud claims 'throughout the entire period of latency, the child learns to love other people who help it in its helplessness and satisfy its needs—a love on the model and in continuation of the relationship of the infant to its nursing caregivers' (Freud 2017, p.119). This craving for love experienced by the child is a part of the process of sexual maturity, where the individual evolves from the sexual gratification received from objects, to a healthy desire for sexual relationships later in life. However, Freud suggests, a child who experiences anxiety in childhood is a manifestation of the feelings of missing the love of their mother:

> Anxiety in children is originally nothing but an expression of the fact that they are missing the person they love. It is for this reason that they are fearful upon encountering any stranger. They are afraid in the dark because in the dark they cannot see the person they love, and they can be calmed down if they can take hold of that person's hand in the dark. … Children who tend to be anxious are affected by such stories which would make no impression whatever upon others; and only children whose sexual drive is excessive or prematurely developed, or who have become demanding due to pampering, tend to be anxious. In this respect, a child turning its libido into anxiety when it cannot satisfy it behaves like an adult. (Freud 2017, p. 120)

Here, Freud discusses the occurrence of anxiety in children, and once again, connects it to the incompletion of the process of sexual maturation. The calmness felt when they can 'take hold' of a person's hand was denied of Barrie when his mother's maternal role hindered. During Barrie's recollection of the day the news broke of the death of his brother, all the stories up to then are hearsay, using phrases such as 'that fighting face which I cannot see' (Barrie 2014, p. 3), mirroring the darkness Freud describes, yet Barrie is not afraid because his mother is with

him. This shows the innocence of childhood, an innocence that is unaware of the events that unfolded around him because of the protection of his mother to shield his woes. Once the news spread however, Barrie claims his memories are now his own recollections, and not dependent on other people's information (Barrie 2014, p. 3). This life-changing event affected him more than he had ever imagined it could, and now the darkness is a much more frightening place; with his mother's protection absent, he must long for the love he once knew whilst also becoming an adult overnight.

Thus, unsurprisingly, the search for love overflows onto paper, as Barrie's texts become consumed by the word, following the concept of love through to the capability of possessing and expressing such a strong emotion. Whilst *Margaret Ogilvy* shows the reasons behind Barrie's apprehension towards love caused by childhood trauma, the characters within his fictitious novels show their experiences of the different types of love, from non-sexual love to infatuation. However, many protagonists have one thing in common: uncertainty about the nature of love they feel. Tommy in *Tommy and Grizel* not only questions his ability to love, but other characters also comment on their observations surrounding the issue:

> 'Shyness I could pardon,' the exasperated Pym would roar; 'but want of interest is almost immoral. At your age the blood would have been coursing through my veins. Love! You are incapable of it. There is not a drop of sentiment in your frozen carcass.' 'Can I help that?' growled Tommy. It was an agony to him even to speak about women. 'If you can't,' said Pym, 'all is over with you. An artist without sentiment is a painter without colours. Young man, I fear you are doomed.' (Barrie 2009, p. 16)

Young Tommy, who has progressed from his title as 'Sentimental Tommy' to being accused of lacking even 'a drop of sentiment' (Barrie 2009, p. 16) in his adult years, holds an underlying connection to Barrie as he permanently lost the warmth of his childhood upon hearing the news of his brother's death. Pym addresses the innate sexual drive that humanity possesses, confused by Tommy's lack of interest when it comes to the opposite sex. Furthermore, Tommy informs

Pym that the problem is out of his own control, as talking to women causes him physical and emotional pain. Pym concludes with the same kind of scrutiny previously seen in Barrie's work, where Tommy's potential is determined by his sexuality, mirroring Barrie's repressed anger and frustration at society's focus on his own personal life. With Freud's theory claiming that interruptions of the psychosexual development of an individual result in personality disorders and asexuality in adulthood becoming widespread in the early 1900s, Barrie's *Tommy and Grizel* embodied undeniable paradigms of this theory in action; both Barrie and Tommy's loss of sentimentality became an unresolved issue as they grew old.

The ability to love was written about in many of Freud's books, as he attempted to establish a theory on love's advantages and disadvantages, posing the question as to whether it was a blessing or a burden to humanity. In *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality,* Freud develops his principle ideas on sexuality, claiming that childhood relationships are accountable for the ability to form bonds in adulthood with the same sex to which they were close whilst growing up. In Barrie's case, he was evidently closest to his mother and therefore, would follow a typical path by meeting and bonding with women as he matured. However, with his relationship with his mother deteriorating overtime, the impact of this deterioration followed him through to adulthood:

> It may further be presumed that in the case of men, a childhood recollection of the affection shown them by their mother and other female persons to whose care they were entrusted as children contributes powerfully to directing their choice toward women … In the case of some hysterics, it is found that the early loss of one of their parents, whether by death, divorce, or estrangement, with the result that the remaining parent attracts all of the child's love, determines the sex of the person later to be chosen as a sexual object, and may thus open the way to a persisting inversion. (Freud 2017, p. 124)

It can be seen in Barrie's memoir, that although he speaks of his father as a kind and loyal man, his lack of references to him when recalling childhood memories suggest they did not share the

same depth of a connection that he spoke about having with his mother. Thus, with Freud's theory in mind, the influence of his mother would determine his ability to love the opposite sex in later life. The clear confusion and distrust towards the female sex that reoccurs throughout his novels, from Captain W's disrespect aimed at David's mother, to Tommy's inability to commit to Grizel, is suggestive of the unsteady relationship Barrie shared with his mother, affecting the way he continued to form mature sexual bonds. Freud claims it is a mother's responsibility to show the child how to access that affection, saying 'she is only fulfilling her duty in teaching the child to love' (Freud 2017, p. 119). Therefore, without this mentor in life, Barrie failed to learn the necessary skills in order to maintain healthy adult sexual relationships, and thus, for him, love never surpassed the love he expressed to his family as a child.

When completing extensive studies on the ideal of love, Freud found that the development and maturation of an individual's attitude towards love is derived from the resolved or unresolved actions of their ego. As an infant, needs wants and desires are immediately satisfied, with the baby's ego becoming infatuated with self-satisfaction and gratification. As the infant gets older, the libidinal energy is directed outwards, firstly towards objects that provide gratification for the child, and secondly aimed at people who return the feeling, stimulating the ego in a way that no longer revolves around the self. However, occasionally, the feeling is unreciprocated, and thus, the libidinal energy is redirected inwards, relying, and focusing once again on the ego:

> It is just in these first years of childhood which later are hidden by amnesia, that this egoism frequently shows itself in most extreme form, and from which regular but clear tendencies thereto, or real remnants thereof, show themselves. For the child loves itself first, and later learns to love others, to sacrifice something of its ego for another. Even those persons whom the child seems to love from the very beginning, it loves at the outset because it has need of them, cannot do without them, in others words, out of egoistical motives. Not until later does the love impulse become independent of egoism. In brief, egoism has taught the child to love. (Freud 2015, p. 126)

If a child progresses to a stage of externally-driven love that is not reciprocated, then Freud claims it will result in a detrimental impact on the individual as they mature, forming a tendency to express narcissistic personality traits in adulthood. Consequently, if according to Freud, both the ego and the primary parental figure in a child's life are the principal influences on how to love, someone like J. M. Barrie never stood a chance.

Tommy's character spends the entirety of the novel *Tommy and Grizel* questioning and also being questioned on the extent of love he feels for Grizel, with Grizel concluding that 'he does not need a wife, but he needs someone to take care of him all men need that; and I can do it much better than any other person' (Barrie 2009, p. 289). Once again, Tommy's libido is centred around his needs, and Grizel realises his love is one based on his own ego and hence, his love will never be directed at her; rather, it will revolve around what she can provide for him and which of his needs she can satisfy. Throughout, Tommy acknowledges his inability to love Grizel, whilst the narrator also commends his efforts:

> Ah, if only Tommy could have loved in this way! He would have done it if he could. If we could love by trying, no one would ever have been more loved than Grizel. 'Am I to be condemned because I cannot?' he sometimes said to himself in terrible anguish; for though pretty thoughts came to him to say to her when she was with him, he suffered anguish for her when he was alone. He knew it was tragic that such love as hers should be given to him, but what more could he do than he was doing? (Barrie 2009, p. 119)

With Freud's theory on the process of sexual development of a child acting as a causal factor for the health of its relationships as an adult, and the core theme of love in *Tommy and Grizel*, the effects of unreciprocated love on J. M. Barrie as a child become palpable in the reading of this text. Paralleling society's mounting pressure on Barrie as he remained childless throughout his life, Tommy also continues to struggle with the concept of love, regardless of Grizel's devotion and patience concerning his feelings, and thus he symbolises the unavoidable

apprehension Barrie experienced daily, as a man who clearly had an abundance of love to give, proven by his aforementioned gestures towards Arthur Llewelyn Davies in his time of need and his lifetime commitment to the Llewelyn Davies boys when their parents passed, but was unable to express this in the society of his time. Like Tommy, Barrie was 'quite incapable of pretending to be anything he was not' (Barrie 2009, p. 58), and regardless of his endless attempts, he eventually realised trying was of no use; he was incapable of experiencing love in any way other than in a platonic sense. Mickalites argues that 'constructed sexual innocence also intersects with and wards off anxieties of class difference and capitalist exploitation' (Mickalites 2012, p. 2), suggesting that this state of sexual innocence is not only the answer to Barrie's apprehension towards love, but also an escape route for the societal pressure and judgement to which Barrie is subject.

From the initial mention of Peter Pan in *The Little White Bird*, his existence is dependent on memory, as the narrator says, 'if you ask her whether he rode on a goat in those days, she says she never heard of his having a goat. Perhaps she has forgotten' (Barrie 2007, p. 69). As Peter is described to the reader, he is portrayed as 'ever so old, but he is really the same age … his age is one week old' (Barrie, 2007, p. 69). Setting up a contradiction from the reader's very first impression of Peter, Barrie implies the infant is older than seven days, whilst also claiming his growth has halted as he will never celebrate a birthday. This is followed by several references to recollections and memories that Peter possesses, again hinting at the progression of time. Furthermore, in the same paragraph, Peter is described as 'a stern moralist' a trait Freud argues advances with the growth of the child as their ego develops in the first few years of life, as the superego's imposition of societal moral standards begins to develop around the age five, and progresses as the individual goes through the stages of sexual development, 'during this period of total or only partial latency, psychical forces are built up which later appear as obstacles in the path of the sexual drive and, like dams, restrict its flow … the claims

of aesthetic and moral ideals' (Freud 2015, p. 93). Thus, Barrie hints at Peter's attempt at self-preservation, utilising the defence mechanism of sublimation, as any unpleasant or socially unacceptable thoughts and intentions are transformed into a socially acceptable manner, suggesting that Peter is old, yet also implying he is young and capable of avoiding the usual repercussions and consequences that adults incur regularly. Consequently, the sexual development of the character is incomplete, and the moral and social standards are not formed, giving him an eternal freedom that most adults can only imagine.

The inspiration for the very title of Barrie's 1902 novel *The Little White Bird* can be derived from Freud's theory on sexual development, as he relates the struggle experienced by some towards their sexuality which is caused by the incompletion of the five stages of sexual development, and the tendency to look for an escape in situations where they must acknowledge their sexuality:

> The hysterical character shows a degree of sexual repression in excess of the normal measure, an intensification of resistances against the sexual drive known to us as shame and disgust, an instinctive flight, as it were, from any intellectual preoccupation with the problem of sexuality, which, in particularly pronounced cases, succeeds in maintaining complete ignorance of sexual matters right into the age of genital maturity … Psychological analysis, however, will invariably know to uncover it, and resolve the contradictory enigma of hysteria through identifying the pair of opposites of a sexual rejection taken too far on the one hand, and an excessively felt sexual need, on the other. (Freud 2017, pp. 83-84)

The mention of flight as a defence mechanism mirrors the dream analysis previously mentioned in Chapter 3, as Barrie's novels contain an abundance of references to flying. In the chapter in *The Little White Bird* devoted to introducing the reader to Peter Pan, the title of the novel comes to life. Peter is described as young yet old and a boy yet also a bird, 'all the birds are born that become baby boys and girls. No one who is human, except Peter Pan (and he is only half human)' (Barrie 2019, p. 67), exhibiting Barrie's imagination at its fullest.

However, the bird references are far too frequent and substantial to pass as anything other than crucial in relation to Barrie's sexual development. In chapter XIV, entitled 'Peter Pan', he explains in relation to children, 'having been birds before they were human, they are naturally a little wild during the first few weeks, and very itchy at the shoulders, where their wings used to be' (Barrie 2019, p. 69). As infants, the children here still possess characteristics of birds, where they could fly from responsibilities without a second thought. As previously mentioned in Freud's theory of personality, the formation of a moral compass is part of the maturation of an individual, it is not a trait with which babies are born, as they instinctively aim to seek immediate self-driven gratification. The birds in Barrie's novel have similar traits, unaware of the external factors that morally conscious individuals would feel compelled to consider before making decisions. The difference between humans and birds in the novel comes down to this level of maturation. Peter is a paradigm of Freud's theory, an individual exhibiting the effects of the incomplete sexual development. Describing Peter as half-bird, half-human allows Barrie to humanise him whilst ridding him of the afflictions that accompany growth and development, thereby allowing him the mode of flight in the novel to physically avoid the anxieties which Barrie mentally escapes through the character he has created, a theme to which he alludes within the initial pages of the chapter, 'he escaped from being a human when he was seven days' old; he escaped by the window … if you think he was the only baby who ever wanted to escape, it shows how completely you have forgotten your own young days' (Barrie 2019, p. 69).

Jerome Neu, discussing Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, acknowledges the rippling effect of Freud's comments surrounding the significance of flying in an individual's dreams. Freud claimed there is an undeniably sensual meaning hidden behind the oneiric in which a man can fly, and Neu traced the impact these observations had on the advertisement industry, capitalising on the sexual aspect of flight:

> Symbolic expression serves simultaneously to communicate and to obscure a sexual content. So it can be used to arouse sexual fantasy, or to associate it with one thing or another, without unacceptable explicitness. Hence images of the kind Freud took to be natural expressions of wish-fulfilment are now commonly produced deliberately, so as to make use of their sexual content. For example, Freud noted that in men 'flying dreams usually have a grossly sensual meaning' (1900a, V, 394). Now, of course, airline tickets are sold by advertisements that feature attractive air hostesses, who smile and say 'Fly me.' (Freud & Neu 2008, pp. 114-115)

Freud's theories, regardless of their popularity amongst the psychology community, were well-known and gave way to an onslaught of opportunities for businesses to tap into the subconscious of their intended audience, using subtle phrases and shrewd intricacies to control the focus of the consumer. Authors had the opportunity to do the same thing, utilising the idea of a repressed desire taking main stage through a fictitious novel, and allowing the reader to access a world of fulfilled wishes without the pressure of judgement from society. By doing this, the authors often expose a hidden feeling of their own, one that resides in their own subconscious. Through analysis, Barrie's use of flight in both *The Little White Bird* and *Peter Pan* becomes more than just wish fulfilment as proposed in Chapter 3; it is also a manifestation of a subconscious sensual feeling that was forced to the unconscious part of his mind.

This subliminal feeling can be seen in Barrie's original version of *Peter Pan* which was written as a play. The stage directions given on each page allow a deeper understanding into Barrie's thought processes as he wrote them, describing actions and subtleties within each scene that show how each character has their own nuances that provide the audience with a more thorough understanding of their personalities. During Act I, Peter starts to worry about his shadow as it becomes unattached from him, and when Wendy tries to help, the stage directions allow the reader an insight into Peter's extreme reaction:

> Wendy: Peter!

(*She leaps out of bed to put her arms around him, but he draws back; he does not know why, but he knows he must draw back*)
Peter: You mustn't touch me. Wendy: Why?
Peter: No one must ever touch me. Wendy: Why?
Peter: I don't know.
(*He is never touched by anyone in the play*). (Barrie 1999, p. 98)

Throughout the play, Barrie depicts Peter as the source of awe amongst females 'you know you can't be my fairy, Tink' (Barrie 2012, p. 19) and envy amongst male characters 'What stayed him was Peter's impertinent appearance as he slept' (Barrie 2012, p. 82). The children are jealous of his freedom and his ability to fly, and female characters tend to bare possessive traits towards him; the fairy Tinkerbell, who Smith claims exudes traits of 'jealousy, rudeness and aggression' (Smith 2012, p. 526), idolises the ground he flies over. Thus, it begs the question as to why Barrie created a character that attracts so much attention, if they will never be touched at any stage in the play or novel? The stage directions telling how Peter knows he cannot be touched but does not know why, suggests that Peter has something buried in his subconscious that is reminding him to avoid physical contact. Whilst Barrie gave Peter these repressed feelings, fortunately, Peter has the power to follow the direction his subconscious leads him without fear of repercussions or judgement. Barrie went through a similar situation in his own life, and Peter represented a heavily desired version of himself, where his life-decisions would not define him or equate to the value he holds as a man in a Victorian society. Thus, through psychoanalysis, a strong argument can be formed to suggest the character Peter Pan is a metaphor for Barrie's repression, as he utilised fiction as a materialisation of the psychotic issues he faced daily.

The representation of the female characters in *Peter Pan* instigated scrutiny from a feminist perspective, with the overreliance and possessive behaviour shown towards Peter allowing them to be categorised, leading to several female personalities blending into one

within the book. Rosalind Ridley, a psychologist who wrote *Peter Pan and The Mind of J. M. Barrie,* acknowledges the problems and criticism that can be withdrawn from both the play and novel:

> Both books deal extensively with the nature of love, comparing, conflating and confusing sexual desire, possessiveness, jealousy, motherly-love, tender loving care, home building and housework. From a feminist perspective, this is very depressing, but I will argue that this conflation can be related to Barrie's disturbed childhood and even more disturbed marriage rather than to what he thought was an appropriate role for women. (Ridley, 2016, p. 5)

By once again, moving beyond the surface level of Barrie's texts, and delving further into the meaning behind his words, whilst also taking his life experiences into account, Ridley attempts to rectify yet another assumption formed about Barrie by solely analysing his books. With the aid of psychoanalysis, the female characters can be seen as more than envious, overassertive admirers; instead, they become an aid to understanding the workings of Barrie's mind, stimulated by the events of his past. However, it is the aspirations of all the characters that hold the most crucial significance in Barrie's portrayal of women. The end goal for each character is not driven by sexual desire; instead, it is the gift of being loved: 'sexual desire is rarely mentioned explicitly although a deep sexuality suffuses much of the text … they all suffer from possessiveness and jealousy but the sought-after prize is always tender loving care' (Ridley 2016, p. 5). Whilst the role of women in Barrie's work will be discussed in depth in the following chapter, it can be concluded that Barrie's questionable writing techniques and themes are the manifestation of a childhood that gave rise to an abundance of repressed emotions, and the representation of women is less of an example of sexism, and more examples of 'logical and linguistic constructions about cognition' (Ridley 2016, p. 5).

The word associations in Barrie's *Peter Pan* are expressive of the overall conveyance of themes and feelings. Each character is accompanied by specific adjectives that coincide with

their growth and development at those specific stages of their lives, for example, Mrs. Darling is a 'lovely lady with a romantic mind' (Barrie 2012, p. 1) when being described before her first child was born. This progresses after the children are born, where she is referred to as a 'good mother' (Barrie 2012, p. 7), as she then conforms to the role that would be expected of a woman in the early 1900s. One word to which most of the characters are connected at one stage in the novel, is the word 'love', yet its use is seldom associated with Peter himself. The one exception to this is at the end of the eighth chapter, when Peter has an altercation with Hook, and love is mentioned to in relation to most children his age:

> It was then that Hook bit him.
> Not the pain of this but its unfairness was what dazed Peter. It made him quite helpless. He could only stare, horrified. Every child is affected thus the first time he is treated unfairly. All he thinks he has a right to when he comes to you to be yours is fairness. After you have been unfair to him he will love you again, but will never afterwards be quite the same boy. No one ever gets over the first unfairness; no one except Peter. He often met it, but he always forgot it. I suppose that was the real difference between him and all the rest. (Barrie 2012, p. 120)

This example of love describes the moment a child realises the world is not there to fulfil their own selfish desires and needs, and indeed, it will seem unfair at times. Barrie suggests that for most children, the first glimpse of injustice will change them forever, as their id begins to develop using the ego and superego, taking into consideration other factors and not just 'the welfare of *numero uno'* (Freud & Neu 2008, p. 270).

As Freud proposed during his developments on the human psyche, the id's instinctive drives motivated by the pleasure principle are tamed by the development of the ego and superego as the child matures. Neu explains how the occurrence of selfish tendencies in an individual can be attributed to society's hostility and judgement towards specific situations. He discusses Freud's theory on social taboos, and the enormity of the detrimental bearing societal

judgement can have on a person. Using the example of masturbation, he expresses how the suppression of such an instinctive urge can lead to extreme measures such as isolation and seclusion. Neu explains how Freud ultimately concluded that the real danger of society is the contagion of thoughts:

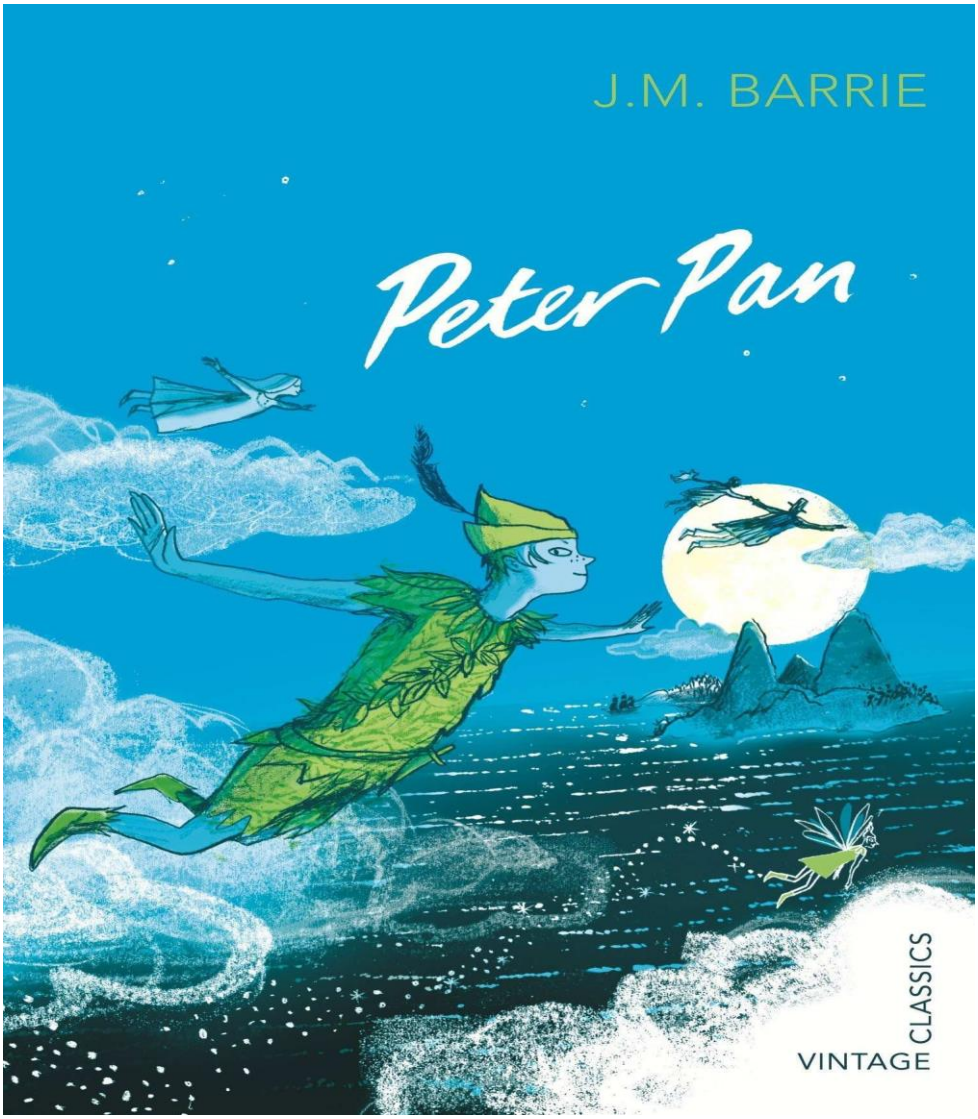
> Freud shows that taboo states in many societies correspond in that taboo people and things are likewise 'contagious,' through constant displacement. Further, people and situations surrounded by taboo are those likely to evoke selfish and hostile impulses, just the ones repressed in the emotional ambivalence of obsessional neurosis. (Freud & Neu 2008, p. 272)

As Peter differs from other children, failing to succumb to the realisation regarding the fairness of life, he keeps his innocence intact and permanently stalls the process of sexual maturation in himself. Yoo claims in relation to Peter's sexuality, 'for Peter, having any heterosexual physical desire and sexual pleasure—that is, engaging in adult sexuality and licentiousness—means losing childhood innocence, growing up physically and mentally, and becoming an adult who should take responsibility for his own behaviours' (Yoo 2019, p. 395). Thus, he must stay oblivious to the sexual awakening that is happening to the people maturing around him, as he remains a selfish, primitive boy, naïve to the severity of some of the situations in which he is involved. What does this say for the man who created Peter? Barrie, a man who repeatedly found himself on the receiving end of judgement and scrutiny regarding his sexuality, exhibited displacement, but not in the form of isolating himself from those around him. He did quite the opposite, he created a character that allowed all adults to reminisce on and consequently love the selfish, impulsive child they once were.

Piers Dudgeon spends a significant amount of time discussing homosexuality in his book, *The Real Peter Pan: The Tragic Life of Michael Llewelyn Davies*, highlighting the injurious impact the illegality of same sex relationships had on people who grew up prior to

1967, when homosexuality was illegal (Dudgeon 2011 p. 285). Whilst many questioned Barrie's tendencies to abstain from sexual relationships, his resilient bond with the Llewelyn Davies boys also prompted some of the attention his personal life attracted. Using Freud's theory on sexual development, Barrie's sexuality becomes more than a question of whether he has a sexual preference – it questions whether he desired sex in any form of the word. His harrowing reminiscences on his childhood experiences, from his overwhelming grief to his incontrollable sense of regret, represent the surface of an exceptionally deep assemblage enriched with hidden meanings. From his obsession with the search for a mother in *Sentimental Tommy* and *The Little White Bird*, to the search for the mother he once knew in *Margaret Ogilvy*, the connections to Freud's Oedipus Complex are undeniable and enormously significant in understanding the adult Barrie became. If Freud's theory on the sexual development of a child is to be applied to Barrie, his incompletion of the latency phase became symbolic of the obstacles that the five-foot-tall Barrie could not manoeuvre, physically or mentally. To remain in that latent phase forever, without having to grow old, he would have avoided experiencing in depth, the struggles of life, including the binaries established by society. Of course, this was not physically possible – his only option was to utilise a mode of metaphorical transport, allowing himself to experience the euphoria through someone else. Enter, Peter Pan '(he is never touched by anyone in the play)' (Barrie 1999, p. 98).

# Chapter 6 ‘You Can’t Catch Me and Make Me a Man’: Gender and Binaries in Barrie’s World of Fiction




6.1 The universally recognised version of Peter Pan

The image above shows Vintage Classics’ cover page of Barrie’s *Peter Pan*, illustrating him flying through the sky in his bright green attire, donning a green dress with matching boots and hat, whilst Wendy flies behind him in a night-dress that blends into the background colours of the night sky (Barrie 2012). Whilst Peter keeps his right eye firmly on the reader, the reader

subconsciously returns the favour with his luminous outfit and mischievous grin immediately drawing all attention onto the main character.

Whilst Barrie gave his entire life trying to break free from the chains created by social constructs, some of his characters epitomised these binaries, whilst others represented the result of a non-binary realm. From the depictions of men versus women, to boys versus men, throughout his fictional texts Barrie applies a technique that draws attention to the way each group of individuals are perceived. In *Better Dead*, Andrew attempts to fulfil the stereotype associated with a young man in a Victorian society, frantically searching for a job in hopes his life will be deemed a success amongst his peers. Tommy, in *Tommy and Grizel*, finds himself struggling with the expectations set upon men in relation to marriage and starting a family, repeatedly claiming his unrelenting efforts have failed to find a way to love Grizel in any manner other than platonic. Freud writes about the idea of assumed masculinity and femininity, and about its development during the psychosexual stages:

> Its place is taken by the contrast between active and passive, which we may designate as the forerunner of sexual polarity, with which it is later fused. That which appears masculine to us in the activity of this phase, observed from the standpoint of the later genital stage, is the expression of an instinct to mastery. (Freud 2015, p. 202)

Whilst Barrie's novels show the impact society has on an individual even after they may have successfully completed their sexual development, it appears that those who have had a lapse during their progression as a child bear the strongest impact when the eyes of society begin to penetrate deep into their consciousness as they move forward through life. Thus, it is not surprising that Captain W, a character who bears an undeniable resemblance to Barrie himself, in *The Little White Bird*, embodies different patterns to those of a traditional male character, as he seems to have little to no interest in sexual relations, showing resentment towards women, and his judgement of their parenting skills from his introduction in the novel. Captain W seems

free when he speaks of Peter Pan, which is proleptic of the boy who manages to overcome the obstacles tied to social concepts in adulthood, demonstrating Barrie's understanding of the impact of socially-constructed binaries on adults in comparison to how they affect children. Thus, as Freud's theories become increasingly relevant when deconstructing the binaries that are present in Barrie's work, this chapter will discuss these binaries and how they are represented, using psychoanalysis to comprehend them in depth.

The people around Peter are initially both assigned and accept their allotted roles. Mrs. Darling is the caregiver of the family. She tucks the children in at night and worries about their well-being. Mr. Darling is the authoritative figure of the household; he carries the financial burdens, weighing up the affordability of having children, paying bills and medical expenses. The male Darling children are introduced as innocent, naïve, and mischievous, with Wendy as the older of the children demonstrating maternal instincts as she attempts to take care of her brothers typical of the Victorian customs they were familiar with, 'Wendy is the Victorian embodiment of female perfection, chastely poised and motherly. Wendy encapsulates the essence of womanly existence, as her childhood is marked by feminine progression' (Dillon 2019). Whilst the Peter we all picture (mainly due to Disney's adaptations – Barrie's original depiction of Peter has him donning browns and tans) breaks the stereotype of a typical young boy as he flies around in his bright green dress, even in The Neverland, Wendy is always asked and expected to retain her role as the mother of the group, 'then all went on their knees, and holding out their arms cried, "O Wendy lady, be our mother." "But you see I am only a little girl. I have no real experience' … what we need is just a nice motherly person"' (Barrie 2012, p. 92). This shows that while some binaries are broken in Barrie's *Peter Pan,* many remain in place and are indicative of the time in which they were written.

Binaries are undeniably a part of everyday life, from the moment the sun rises, and the sky changes from dark to bright, to choosing which of the male or female signs to follow in a

public toilet. In the late 1800s however, they were even more hegemonic with the dichotomy creating unwritten rules and guidelines as to how to behave in specific scenarios. Claude Lévi-Strauss, a structuralism theorist, described the role of binaries as a way of understanding the meaning of a word, by using its opposite to contrast it to give it more depth. He claimed, 'when two characters are opposed in a binary structure, their symbolic meaning is virtually forced to be both general and easily accessible because of the simplicity of the difference between them' (Fourie 2001, p. 152). Barrie was exposed to such binaries throughout his life: successful/unsuccessful, short/tall, serious/funny, and the dichotomy with the heaviest effect on him, that of adult/child, which will be discussed further in this chapter. Although Barrie's life was significantly influenced by this binary, looking closer into his work shows that this binary operated in tandem with the gender/sex binary, as Barrie struggled in negotiating a passage between the expected roles of both man and woman, and boy and man. Morgenroth et al. highlights the importance of societal influence on gender, explaining how gender is not only determined by chromosomes, but also on the societal and cultural ideology of how each gender should develop, conform and consequently behave:

> The gender/sex binary is not only descriptive (i.e., describing what sexes and genders exist and how these two concepts are related) but also prescriptive and proscriptive (i.e., dictating which genders and sexes should or should not exist and how they should or should not be related). In other words, binary thinking about gender/sex enforces a social system in which individuals with two X chromosomes are expected to develop female bodies, identify as women, and act in line with feminine stereotypes, while individuals with an X and a Y chromosome develop male bodies, identify as men, and act in line with masculine stereotypes. (Morgenroth et al. 2021, p. 731)

Morgenroth here reduces the binary thinking that comes from the science behind male and female chromosomes, and how this impacts the societal stereotypes for those born with the XX chromosome and those born with XY with a very definitive example of assumed male and

female identification. This prescriptive and proscriptive element to the gender/sex binary contributed to the development of characters such as Mr. Darling, who conformed to the norms, whilst also producing Peter Pan, who challenged them. As mentioned in previous chapters, societal perceptions played an immense role in Barrie's life, which materialised in his fictional novels. The characters in his novels also depict their own personal and complicated struggles in the face of the social system of gender stereotypes, with the characters that epitomise Barrie himself as a male growing up in a Victorian society, experiencing all of the restrictions and demands that are addressed in Barrie's diaries and memoir.

Morgenroth's assertion of how gender is influenced by society resonates with the previous analysis of Barrie's 'My Ghastly Dream', where Barrie found himself in an uncomfortable situation, fuelled by the societal pressure to conform to heterosexual masculinity. This theme continues throughout Barrie's texts, for example, in *Better Dead*, Andrew must conform to societal expectations of a successful, young, male to avoid the wrath of The S.D.W.S.P. Throughout the novel, individuals are judged on their position in society, including their marital status and the way they present themselves when in public. The narrator claims, 'in Wheens there was not much difference between the men and the women'(Barrie 2018, p. 5), a statement made immediately after referring to a casual courting between a banker and his female companion, showing the disapproval that accompanies failing to marry, 'the banker was unmarried' (Barrie 2018, p. 5). Similarly, Tommy from *Tommy and Grizel*, exhibits a desire to be able to love Grizel the way he thinks he should, or rather, the way society asserts he should 'my fitting punishment is that I failed' (Barrie 2009, p. 297). When a baby is born with XX or XY chromosomes, their gender does not decide who they should marry, thus, Barrie's texts show how society sets the social stereotypes that are attributed to each gender.

Throughout Barrie's work, specific binaries tend to be used in conjunction with others,

each having a ripple effect on the next. One of the most prominent binaries in Barrie's memoir *Margaret Ogilvy*, which appears to frame the entire piece of work, is the debilitating effects of his mother's sudden switch from being present to absent at a highly impressionable stage of his life. In Chapter III, aptly entitled 'What I Should Be', he claims, 'I am not of those who would fling stones at the change' (Barrie 2014, p. 15), yet his whole life became moulded by the adjustment to his family situation. Ultimately, this worked congruently with the child/adult binary that played a significant part in some of his most successful novels. His memoir, however, exhibits the reality surrounding the loss of childhood innocence, as Barrie uses his recollection of memories to describe the aftermath of the death of his brother as the exact moment when he knew that his childhood had ended. With the end of childhood, knowledge becomes his own, as all stories before the end of his sixth year of life are described as hearsay, creating another binary of ignorance/knowledge, 'it is all guess-work for six years, and she whom I see in them is the woman who came suddenly into view when they were at an end' (Barrie 2014, p. 2). By creating binary oppositions within his work, each binary has a varying weight of value relative to his growth. As a child, memory is fragile, and although memory-loss is a worrying prospect, the mind of a child is constantly replacing old memories with new ones, losing the heavy, undesirable ones as they go. With adulthood, most memories are accessible, and the unpleasant versions frequently bubble at the surface. Thus, Barrie, in his writing, has created this binary based on a positive/negative basis.

With the negative aspect of adulthood established in *Margaret Ogilvy*, Barrie's fictional novel *Better Dead*, embodies and develops this conception, as the protagonist Andrew Riach learns for himself just how difficult it is to be an adult in the late 1800s. Andrew Nash describes this neglected novel as 'best understood as a satire on contemporary political, social and literary themes' (Nash 2015, p. 19). As the character Andrew establishes his career as a writer, he is immediately made aware of the preconceptions that exist involving the legitimacy of his career

choice. Without warning, Andrew has surpassed the binary of child/adult, and is now looking at a whole new set of binaries that would affect the course of his life: married/single, liked/disliked, successful/unsuccessful, 'they prate who say it is success that tries a man' (Barrie 2018, p. 47).

Whilst the theme of uncertainty around his sexuality materialised in many of his novels, *Better Dead* satirically dealt with the burden of many other expectations that sat on his shoulders. The people around him worried about his decision to pursue a career in London, when others around him chose to become doctors and lawyers; thus, society associated his job with disappointment and failure, creating that successful/unsuccessful binary that Barrie was accustomed to, based on prejudice, prejudgement, and assumptions. Barrie used Andrew, by demonstrating biographical tones through his character, to break these binaries in fiction, ignoring the pre-set conceptions and following his intentions. From the beginning of the novel, Andrew embodies Barrie's resilience, showing that success is a measure relative to each person, and that, regardless of their achievements in life, even the most successful are still subject to suffering from the flawed condition of humanity, 'far be it from our intention to maintain that Andrew was invariably successful. That is not given to any man. Sometimes his hands slipped' (Barrie 2018, p. 52).

However, while Andrew is fulfilling the latter part of the child/adult binary, he finds himself heading towards the weight of an interlinking set that places adults in their own specific categorising groups, the binary of young/old. With the pressure of securing a job in London, Andrew came across a society that aims to kill anyone over forty-five as a solution to the problem of scarcity of jobs for newly qualified hopefuls. They proposed that people over that age had no possible chance of achieving more than they already had done, and therefore, they were better off dead:

The society only asks from its probationers the faith which it has in them. They take no

> oath. We speak in deeds. The Brotherhood do not recognise the possibility of treachery; but they are prepared to cope with it if it comes. Better far, Andrew Riach, to be in your grave, dead and rotten and forgotten, than a traitor to the cause. (Barrie 2018, p. 28)

Barrie dramatises the situation, using satire to aid him in his quest to exhibit the overwhelming feeling of helplessness towards growing old, by sensationalising the boundary that separates young and old in this novel. His work is the only thing that gave him solace in a world of narrow-mindedness, and even here in *Better Dead*, he acknowledges that one day his pen will slow down, and for him, he would be better six feet under than to willingly force his pen into retirement. Furthermore, the president of the society also alludes to the constant pressure that writers face in society, namely to become a success and provide for those around them. Andrew is told his cause is more important than the expectations placed upon him, and young or old, once he stays true to his own cause his life will be worthwhile.

Whilst the Society for Doing Without Some People uses drastic measures to separate the young people from the old, they also encourage individuals to choose one fate for themselves: selflessness, or selfishness:

> 'You have told me', said the stranger, now speaking rapidly, 'that at times you have felt tempted to take your life, that life for which you will one day have to account. Suicide is the coward's refuge. You are miserable? When a young man knows that, he is happy. Misery is but preparing for an old age of delightful reminiscence. You say that London has no work for you, that the functions to which you looked forward are everywhere discharged by another. That need not drive you to despair. If it proves that someone should die, does it necessarily follow that the someone is you?'
> 'But is not the other's life as sacred as mine?' 'That is his concern.' (Barrie 2018, p. 20)

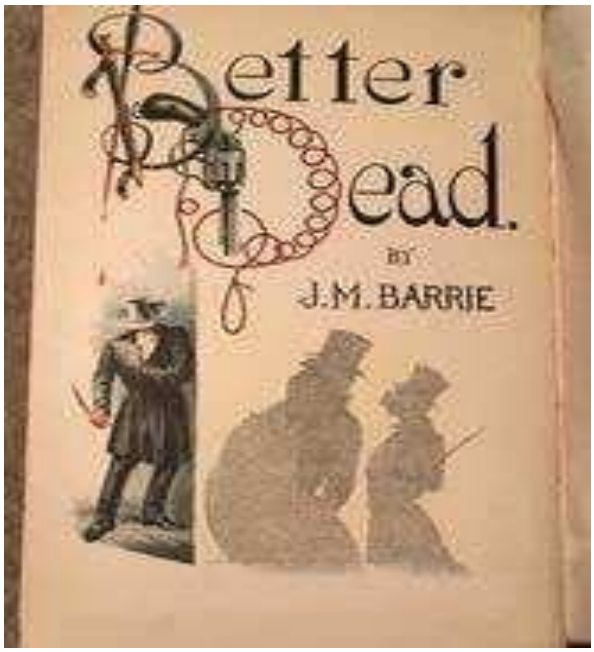
The stranger here interlinks all the above binaries, suggesting that the key to overcoming misery lies within the ability to put oneself before anyone else. This stranger has achieved what seems impossible to Andrew, by ignoring the innate instinct people develop as they grow old to consult their conscience before making decisions. Andrew questions the stranger's flippancy

regarding other lives, whilst his conscience breaks through momentarily. However, through satire, Barrie uses the stranger, about whom we never find out any personal information, to remind Andrew and ultimately the reader, that other people's business is exactly that, exclusively their own.

*Better Dead*'s use of satire to investigate the narrow social suppositions surrounding the definition of success is evident from the moment the reader first opens the book. The title itself prompts the question to be raised regarding who within the novel is better off dead, and what characteristics the unfortunate character possesses to be attributed such a fate. The novel's cover also alluded to the same topic, with Andrew Nash explaining in his article devoted to understanding this often-forgotten novel, the connotation behind the original cover of the novel (Barrie 1891), which was designed by a friend of Barrie's, a cartoonist named William Mitchell:

> The cover pictured in silhouette the unmistakeable figures of two eminent politicians: Lord Randolph Churchill (the father of Sir Winston Churchill), who was the current Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his predecessor Sir William Harcourt. To the left of them, behind a wall, a sinister-looking assassin, dagger in hand, is poised to strike. The 'B' and 'D' in the letters of the title are made up of a rapier and its scabbard and belt, a revolver and a coiled noose. (Nash 2015, p. 26)

Without this background information provided by Nash, the attire of the characters gracing the cover still provides a sense of superiority, as the top hats and long coats are easily deciphered from the shadow image.




6.2 Cover Illustration of *Better Dead*

The two silhouettes appear to be in discussion whilst another figure lurks behind a wall, holding a dagger in one hand, mysteriously reaching into his coat with the other. The drop of blood hovers over the assumed assassin, whilst the gun that constructs the line of the 'd' points towards one of the victims. Immediately, there is a distinction drawn between the two types of characters through the medium of art.

As Andrew begins to find his own victims, politicians occupy the opening lines of his list, '"he is a politician," said Andrew reluctantly… I thought of calling at his house, and putting it to him' (Barrie 2018, p. 39). Thus, the individuals who hold the positions deemed successful and influential in society become the most vulnerable in this novel, as Barrie attempts to counteract these predetermined binaries. Success here does not go hand-in-hand with hope, as would normally be assumed. One of the only mentions of childhood in this novel accompanies a scene where the protagonist wrote buoyant pieces for newspapers about eminent individuals who were sick at the time, pretending that he was a friend of theirs in an attempt to engage the readers and provide them with a deep and heart-wrenching character-analysis that concealed the truth about their lives of dishonesty. By doing so when they were so ill, he was creating a

false lasting impression of the individual before they died. These pieces depicted scenes of youth and prosperity most likely in an attempt to hide the truth about their characters as adults, toying with the assumption that all children had a period of purity and innocence before puberty stole it from them, 'he made up characteristic anecdotes about his childhood, his reputation at school, his first love, and sent them as the reminiscences of a friend to the great London dailies' (Barrie 2018, p. 10). Whilst to the newspapers, it seemed to be a kind gesture from a worried friend, when some of the inflicted people recovered and revealed the truth, he was left red-faced. Thus, the prospect of permanent hope is one that Barrie attempts to prove is fully applicable only to someone who can remain forever young.

Barrie's apparent optimism that follows childhood is explored in *Sentimental Tommy,* as the novel follows his progression from an awe-inspired child to a woeful adult in *Tommy and Grizel.* Whilst young Tommy is no stranger to struggles and obstacles, they fail to weigh him down as they can be seen to do when he grows up. *Tommy and Grizel* is an undeniable exploration of Barrie's perception of love, however, *Sentimental Tommy* reconnoitres the foundations of the emotion by delving into the struggle against conventional masculinity. Sarah Green highlights how Tommy's sentimentalism is attributed to the constant references to Tommy as a boy by the narrator (the word itself features on 115 pages of the 281 pages novel), which has a ripple effect on Tommy's inability to love in later life. Tommy's existence is shadowed by the ideal of masculinity, with Green claiming, 'Barrie constantly depicts these gender ideals as determined, not by a system of social normativity, but by a scientifically supported conception of human nature' (Green 2017, p. 193). A conversation between Tommy and Grizel that occurs towards the end of the book, within the chapter entitled 'Who Told Tommy To Speak', demonstrates a clear metaphorical contest between this social normativity and nature Green speaks about:

'What makes you look at me like that?' he cried. 'I believe I think you are masterful,'

> she gasped. 'Me!' he retorted indignantly.
>
> 'Now,' she went on, waving him back, 'now I know why I would not give in to you when you wanted me to be Stroke's wife. I was afraid you were masterful!'
>
> 'Was that it?' cried Tommy.
>
> 'Now,' she proceeded, too excited to heed his interruptions, 'now I know why I would not kiss your hand, now I know why I would not say I liked you. I was afraid of you'
>
> 'Were you?' His eyes began to sparkle, and something very like rapture was pushing the indignation from his face. 'Oh, Grizel, have I a power ower you?'
>
> 'No, you have not,' she cried passionately. 'I was just frightened that you might have. Oh, oh, I know you now!' (Barrie 2007, pp. 252-253)

Grizel informs an oblivious Tommy of his subconscious powerful presence that resulted in her feelings of fear towards him. His reaction, however, holds the most important information, as the exasperation begins to leave his face with the knowledge he gained from Grizel's claim. Evidently, Tommy's nature is telling him one thing, whilst the overwhelming burden of social constructs whisper in his ear, reminding him that by gaining power over Grizel, he is one step closer to assuming conventional roles of masculinity, and to solidifying his future place as an influential male in society. Grizel, however, is aptly aware of Tommy's instincts, acknowledging that it is not a usual occurrence for him to fulfil such a role, claiming she now knows his nature may take a back seat when society is intruding.

Tommy and Grizel's relationship continues to provoke interest, as the theme of unrequited love begins to take centre stage as the novel progresses.Person highlights the ineffable nature of love, and its distinctiveness from any other experience, claiming, 'to a well-educated layman things that have to do with love are incommensurable with everything else; they are, as it were, written on a special page on which no other writing is tolerated' (Person *et al.* 2013, p. 18), Freud claimed in *Observations on Transference-Love*, summing up the extremity of meaning that can be deciphered from analysing a person who loves, and one who wants to love, but cannot manage to access the emotion. For Tommy, his attempts to fall in

love fail to go unnoticed, as he repeatedly refers to his want and need to submerge himself in the emotion- filled 'special page' of his life (Person *et al.* 2013, p. 18). The words inscribed on the white background although written legibly, fail to translate clearly in his brain, 'he did not love, but he was the perfect lover; he was the artist trying in a mad moment to be as well as to do' (Barrie 2007, p. 111).

Green also delves into the notion of love in *Tommy and Grizel* by drawing a link between love as a task or game, and Tommy's struggle with masculinity as he becomes an adult in *Tommy and Grizel*, 'this capacity for aping love becomes emblematic of Tommy's centreless, amoral personality: his claim that 'love is a series of thrills' indicates this approach to love as a game rather than a solemn state with serious consequences' (Green 2017, p. 192). The references to Tommy as a boy actually occur more frequently in *Tommy and Grizel* than they appear in the Bildungsroman, which is significant considering the latter novel's purpose is to show Tommy's development as a child before the reader can understand him as an adult:

> And it was just the same when they returned to Double Dykes, which they added to and turned into a comfortable home Tommy trying to become a lover by taking thought, and Grizel not letting on that it could not be done in that way. She thought it was very sweet of him to try so hard sweeter of him than if he really had loved her, though not, of course, quite so sweet to her. He was a boy only. She knew that, despite all he had gone through, he was still a boy. And boys cannot love. Oh, who would be so cruel as to ask a boy to love? (Barrie 2009, p. 287)

Before, after and during the discussion of the honeymoon, Grizel also acknowledges and repeatedly refers to Tommy's attempts to love her, both physically and mentally, as she describes his efforts as admirable. William Rees suggests that Freudian theory is crucial in dissecting the binaries of love, claiming 'Freud provides us with a way of thinking about human relationships outside of the binaries of selfless v selfish love that so commonly constrain our popular and theoretical ideas about love' (Rees 2020, p. 1). Whilst societal norms provide a

basis for the kind of love Tommy longed for, throughout the novel, both Tommy and Grizel attempt to come to terms with their own unique and daunting version of love, one that breaks stereotypes and juxtaposes selfless with selfish love. Thus, a challenge is set for the reader to look past the assumption that one sided love is caused by selfishness on Tommy's behalf, when in reality, he is sacrificing everything about his identity in an attempt to conform to the norm, and more importantly, prioritise Grizel's feelings.

Although Tommy's child-like personality traits may encourage readers to deem him as selfish, with the use of Freud's theories, a more in-depth conclusion can be taken from the analysis of the character. Interestingly, the above quote from *Tommy and Grizel* is featured on the first page of the chapter entitled 'The Little Gods Return with a Lady', implying that Grizel is developing into a young woman; however, the last sentence of the same page concludes that Tommy's development is complete, and he is still a boy regardless of his past experiences (Barrie 2009, p. 287). Thus, Barrie uses the binaries boy/man and girl/woman concurrently with the nature of a relationship, and the sexual/platonic binary, to show how one binary affects another. Grizel, described as a lady, has only one failure in her relationship with Tommy, the inability to make him love her, while she holds an abundance of love for him. Tommy exhibits snippets of maturity as he acknowledges the way in which he should be treating his wife, 'every morning he ordered himself to gaze at her with rapture, as if he had wakened to the glorious thought that she was his wife' (Barrie 2009, p. 287). However, his constant efforts are to no avail, as Barrie shows how his inability to move from boy to man means he cannot commit to a sexual relationship. By suggesting it is impossible to ask a boy to love, it becomes apparent that for Barrie, the stresses that accompany love and relationships are not easily avoided, even by attempts to abstain from commitment due to societal pressure. The only way to truly avoid the burdens is to remain a boy forever.

Both Tommy and Barrie exhibit traits of incomplete sexual development, as discussed

in Chapter 5. During sexual development, Freud claims that 'a man retains his leading zone unchanged from childhood. In this change of their leading erogenous zone, and in the wave of repression at puberty, which, as it were, puts aside their infantile masculinity' (Freud 2017, p. 118). The binary separating infantile and mature masculinity is created during this process according to Freud, and contributes to healthy sexual relationships in adulthood as the individual has established and is confident in their masculinity. For Barrie and Tommy however, the situation is affected by their development, meaning their masculinity is only asserted by the opinion of those around them. Patricia Clough also acknowledges the social aspect that interlinks gender and sexuality, claiming that 'feminist theorists have treated gender as a social construction of sexuality, as if sexuality itself is not socially constructed as such' (Clough 1995, p. 1074), which shows the impact society has on gender rather than the chromosomal formation mentioned previously in this chapter.

Throughout *Tommy and Grizel*, Tommy finds himself becoming dependent on Grizel's reassurance, however, Grizel's direct quotes about masculinity are all in reference to other men and not Tommy. Speaking of David, Grizel says on three separate pages, '"No one could have been more manly and gentle and humble," she said beseechingly' (Barrie 2009, p. 194), followed by '"if you only knew how manly and gentle and humble he was," she cried' (Barrie 2009, p. 195) on the next page, until finally on the third consecutive page, she realises she is repeating herself, '"oh Tommy, if you knew how manly …" and then she remembered that she had said that already' (Barrie 2009, p. 196). On the following pages, Tommy is the one who attempts to tell Grizel about a conversation that took place between Elspeth and a doctor, about his manhood, claiming, 'Elspeth told me that he admires the gentle and manly dignity with which I submit to the blow, and I have no doubt that, as soon as I heard that, I made it more gentle and manly than ever!' (Barrie 2009, p. 202). Tommy, in true Barrie fashion, uses his words to convey a message that his manner could not. Whilst he attempts to indirectly influence

Grizel's opinion, he also exhibits his insecurity, as he claims that he embodied a stronger sense of masculinity when he discovered they could see the characteristic within him. Ultimately, Tommy can be seen to be affected by the social constructs of masculinity; however, his masculinity is undeniably agitated by his inability to develop into a sexual being in adulthood. His character, and how he deals with his relationship with Grizel, therefore, is a prime example of the extreme distinction between infantile and mature masculinity.

With Barrie's sexuality attracting copious amounts of undesired attention, the line drawn by him between sexuality and asexuality is one that must be studied within his novels in order to decipher where the broad gap for Barrie started to develop, and why he found it so hard to narrow it. As previously mentioned, his characters all exhibit quite obvious displays of unusual sexuality, from Tommy's inability to love, to Peter's disinterest in the female characters for anything other than the care and guidance they can provide him with, based on his desire for a maternal influence in his life. In *A Cambridge Companion to Freud*, Jerome Neu discusses Freud's assertion of the impact that the Oedipus Complex has on an individual's ability to separate asexuality from becoming a sexual being as an adult:

> Men, he suggests, split women symbolically and erotically into mothers, or mothers and sisters, on the one hand and prostitutes on the other. The former cannot be sexually desired, though they are supposed to be the kind of woman a man should marry, and the latter, though they are martially and socially forbidden, can be sexually desired. As long as a woman symbolizes the mother, she is a forbidden oedipal object-choice, an indication of an attachment carried on too long. Fleeing to a woman who is or is like a prostitute protects the defensively constructed idea of the mother's sexual purity and denies oedipal desire. Alternatively, it equates mother with a prostitute, thereby giving her son access to her along with his father. Psychically derived impotence follows the same line of reasoning, so that men become impotent with women who are like, or who represent psychically, their mothers. Freud here gives us the psychodynamics of a split long present in Western culture, literature, and social organization. Indeed, the wife must eventually reciprocate her husband's setting her up as an asexual mother, as 'a

> marriage is not made secure until the wife has succeeded in making her husband her child as well and in acting as a mother to him'. (Freud & Neu 2008, p. 239)

From the reading of *Margaret Ogilvy*, although her downfall caused by grief affected Barrie massively, it is apparent that he holds her in a place of high regard. As she become a shell of the woman she once was, 'what she had been, what I should be, these were the two great subjects between us in my boyhood' (Barrie 2014, p. 8), Barrie continued to search for any possible leftover pieces of her maternal character on which to build. His father is seldom referred to in the text; however, when he is spoken about, again, he is described as a man of honour and loyalty to his family, suggesting that an unresolved Oedipal Complex for Barrie did not result in him resenting the male influence in his life. Thus, if Freud's aforementioned theory is to be applied to Barrie's life, it can be concluded that his interruption of his sexual development resulting in him having to look out for the well-being of his mother, along with his inability to lower his extraordinarily high standards from the woman he grew up with in order to find a sexual partner, play a significant role in constructing the gap between the binaries of sexuality and asexuality.

With the plentiful references to mothers in most of Barrie's novels, and his own mother's life being followed throughout his memoir, Birkin highlights one of many captivating sentences that featured in Barrie's diaries, which appeared to be the brainstorm that led to the creation of Peter Pan. It states, '*The Mother* – treated from child's point of view – how mother scolds, wheedles, &c – children must be tickled by recognising truth of scenes' (Birkin 2003, p. 214). Although some may think this is in reference to Mrs. Darling, Adrian Smith argues that it is about Wendy, and therefore, Barrie's work progresses from dealing with the binaries of boy/man, to those of girl/woman, child/adult, and reliant/responsible all within the one character: 'the child at the heart of this tale, I argue in accord with Meisel's essay, is Wendy Darling; and her story is that of her emergence from childhood into adolescence' (Smith 2012,

pp. 517-518). Birkin also comments on this, as he believes Wendy is the ultimate example of a mother taking her place in the world, however; he also believes she is built from the shadow of Margaret Ogilvy that remained in Barrie's mind, 'but it was the image of the substitute mother that was to take the deepest root: the memory of his own mother as a little girl … epitomized as Wendy mothering the Lost Boys and Peter Pan in The Neverland' (Birkin 2003, pp. 34-35). Barrie takes his own idealised version of his mother that he had built upon memories of her before her demise, and utilises it when creating Wendy, and within the novel, the reader watches as Wendy goes from a child, to the epitome of Peter's idealised version of a mother and caregiver, to maturing and growing into a teenager and then to an adult in her own right, representing an opposing scenario to how Barrie's own life as a teenager and adult developed. Jade Dillon refers to this ideology in her blog post, claiming Wendy's 'maternal desire towards the lost boys of The Neverland reinforces the argument that Victorian children were subjected to a very prescriptive societal ideology in relation to the notion of female perfection in terms of how society wanted women to behave' (Dillon 2019). Once again, society's expectations can be seen to establish these binaries that shape the development of characters in Barrie's texts.

Furthermore, Smith recognises the binary of daughter/mother that is established, as Wendy continues her adventures in The Neverland. As the story begins, Wendy along with her brothers are described as typical dependent children, as their mother Mrs. Darling sees to their needs, wishing they would never grow up 'oh why can't you remain like this forever' (Barrie 2012, p. 1). Quickly, Wendy's image changes as Peter and The Lost Boys repeatedly assert their need for her to be their mother. Barrie uses Peter and Hook to juxtapose Wendy's ongoing transition between mother and daughter in the novel:

> Wendy's dealings with Peter and Hook as the tale unfolds can be seen to constitute her struggle within the context of the depressive position to integrate her awareness of her split paternal imago, opening the way to the Oedipal challenge of finding an erotic but

> safe connection with her father's masculinity, albeit a deficient and damaged masculinity in the eyes of her unconscious. The tale thus presents us with intertwined strands of psychological development … That is, it is only within the depressive position awareness of her father as a whole-and-other-object that Wendy can better relate to him, and thus proceed with her development as a budding young woman. (Smith 2012, p. 521)

Whilst Peter charms Wendy into conforming to his ideals that involve embodying a position of maturity and growth, Hook surprisingly is a metaphor for Wendy's innocence, as he physically removes her from her position as the mother of the group when he abducts her. Smith acknowledges the impact which Wendy's sexual development would have on her character, referring to the Oedipal Complex as an obstacle that needed to be overcome. Throughout the novel, the narrator describes Mr. Darling as a caring yet stern, loving yet selfish character, with examples of a strained relationship between him and his wife and children in places 'some men would have resented her … but Mr. Darling had far too fine a nature for that … at once forgot his rage' (Barrie 2012, p. 10). The above quote shows how Hook embodies a form of masculinity that resonates with that of a father figure, where his protection from the world that accompanies an individual when they grow up outweighed the suspicions raised by Peter, 'a different treatment was accorded to Wendy, who came last. With ironical politeness Hook raised his hat to her, and, offering her his arm, escorted her to the spot where the others were being gagged' (Barrie 2012, p. 79).

Moreover, Peter also represents a version of fatherhood, symbolising the fun and adventure that occurs between father and child. With both characters displaying traits of masculinity, *Peter Pan* can be viewed as a deep analysis of 'Wendy's psychological development' (Smith 2012, p. 532), as she utilises The Neverland as an attempt to resolve the problems she encountered in her own life. Smith draws attention to the pattern that occurs when the reader is introduced to Wendy as an adult with her own husband and daughter, Jane.

Whilst Barrie does not give much away about the family scenario, it can be assumed that Wendy's willingness to allow Jane to visit The Neverland is instigated by a similar scenario to her own as a child, suggesting Wendy's Oedipus Complex was resolved enough to seek a husband who epitomised the male role model in her life. However, her sexual development seems to have been affected as that included all of the undesired traits that caused the strain in her relationship with her father. By allowing Jane to go to The Neverland, she has her own chance which may end in happiness, '"it is just for spring cleaning time Jane said, he wants me always to do his spring cleaning." "If only I could go with you," Wendy sighed' (Barrie 2012, p. 231).

Barrie's *Peter Pan* is a leading example of the depiction of the adventurous fun-filled life of a conscienceless child, in direct contrast with the attempt to lead a moral life whilst balancing numerous responsibilities as an adult. However, by reading the novel with differing perspectives, many more aspects to binaries start to become apparent. As previously mentioned, whilst the portrayal of the male/female binary is indicative of the time in which the novel was written, it is also critical to examine the impact which this has on the story, and perhaps how different certain features may have been if written in an alternative period in time. The foundation of The Neverland is built upon this dichotomy; without the characteristics of the female characters enabling the male individuals to continue their carefree adventures, the essence of The Neverland would lose its meaning:

> Peter Pan's creation and maintenance of the hegemonic normalcy of male domination of The Neverland exemplifies the desires and undercurrent of the patriarchal economy of trade … In order to keep the youth, vigour, and beauty associated with the homoerotic structure of The Neverland, the feminine must remain fractured and in conflict with one another lest the whole symbolic order come crashing down when the goods get together. If the goods got together it would mean an end to the play of boys with boys, which would connect them with the world of marriage to women, production of children, and abandonment of their true relationship wishes, both in reality and The Neverland. (Shipley 2012, p. 158)

Shipley, by applying feminist theory, in particular the theory of Luce Irigaray, discovered that the utilisation of the binary of male/female in *Peter Pan* was critical to the core theme of the novel. This shows the reader that being a boy is undeniably desired more than becoming a man, however, a female child in *Peter Pan* is void of even this optimism bestowed upon the boys.

Whilst Mrs. Darling is originally introduced fulfilling her role as a mother and housewife, it is not until her young daughter is expected to assume a similar role as a child in The Neverland that the real implications of the male/female binary become apparent in *Peter Pan.* Mrs. Darling first hears of Peter as she 'was tidying up her children's minds' (Barrie 2012, p. 7), whilst Wendy is later described as 'a tidy child' (Barrie 2012, p. 11), and interestingly this is an adjective that is only used to describe those two female characters throughout the novel. At the end of the novel, Jane, Wendy's daughter, returns to The Neverland to commence spring cleaning, an action that is never performed by a male character. Peter in fact returns for Jane for this reason, showing the cultural order has failed to progress, 'the sociocultural order that is created by the economy of representation and the exchange of goods forms the patriarchal control and power of men over women in reality' (Shipley 2012, p. 158). Shipley also highlights the importance of gendered role assignment, claiming the exchange of goods within the novel is reliant on the heterosexual narrative that is established (Shipley 2012, p. 146). The female characters exclusive to The Neverland provide the island with the narrative it needs to demonstrate the element of control that separates the male and female characters from each other. The Indian Princess Tiger Lily is described as 'the most beautiful' and 'the belle of the Piccaninnies' (Barrie 2012, p. 70), and is also known to be dependent on Peter, 'or we might tell how Peter saved Tiger Lily's life in the Mermaids' Lagoon' (Barrie 2012, p. 102), and 'Peter had saved Tiger Lily from a dreadful fate' (Barrie 2012, p. 130).

Similarly, Tinker Bell's initial description was sexualised, emphasising her feminine

features, and focusing on her image and not her personality or characteristics, 'it was a girl called Tinker Bell exquisitely gowned in a skeleton leaf, cut low and square, through which her figure could be seen to the best advantage. She was slightly inclined to embonpoint' (Barrie 2012, p. 30). In comparison, when the boys discuss Hook with Peter, they learn about his reputation, and his image is focused around his size, his strength and how Peter can compete with him in a fight, 'it is this, if we meet Hook in open fight, you must leave him to me' (Barrie 2012, p. 59). This theme extends beyond The Neverland characters and into the realm of reality, with the narrator claiming that Mr. Darling was a strong man (Barrie 2012 p. 22), and a gentleman who had the fortune of winning Mrs. Darling, like a prize or trophy, reducing her humanity and removing her agency, 'the way he won her was this … he nipped in first … he got all of her' (Barrie 3023, p. 2). Just as Tommy found his strength in Grizel's vulnerability, so too does Mr. Darling gain confidence when he is exhibiting his authority over Nana, the dog who takes care of the children, 'Nana ran to him beseechingly, but he waved her back. He felt he was a strong man again. '"In vain, in vain," he cried; "the proper place for you is the yard, and there you go to be tied up this instant"' (Barrie 2012, p. 26). Anthony Elliott claims that the reasoning behind the fragmented concepts of identity that can be seen in these characters is best understood through psychoanalysis, 'it is because of this fragmentation of identity that the concept of identification is so crucial in psychoanalytic theory: the subject creates identity by means of identification with other persons, located in the symbolic context of society, culture and politics' (Elliott 2004, p. 27). Thus, the characters Barrie created, Mr. Darling in particular, identify in relation to the social constructs and presumed assumptions of those around them.

Hence, this process of identification with others is stimulated by society, as individuals become aware of the scrutiny and judgement, they are vulnerable to as they grow and develop, making decisions based on their moral compasses which may be aligned differently to those that are casting the judgement. Thus, Freud's theories provide an explanation as to why the

concept of these binaries remains in place in all the above characters, and also why Peter is a character who challenges the permanency of the palpable line that divides the binary male/female:

> Loss and gender affinity are directly linked in Freud's theory to the Oedipus complex, the psyche's entry into received social meanings. For Freud, the Oedipus complex is the nodal point of sexual development, the symbolic internalization of a lost, tabooed object of desire. In the act of internalizing the loss of the pre-Oedipal mother, the infant's relationship with the father (or, more accurately, symbolic representations of paternal power) becomes crucial for the consolidation of both selfhood and gender identity. Trust in the intersubjective nature of social life begin here: the father, holding a structural position which is outside and other to this imaginary sphere, functions to break the child/mother dyad, thus referring the child to the wider culture and social network. (Elliott 2004, p. 26)

Here, Elliott explains importance of a resolved Oedipal Complex, and its impact on how one establishes their idea of gender along with societies constructs. Peter, as a boy who appears originally in *The Little White Bird*, is clearly void of parental bonds, as he flies to the window inside which where his mother resides, the iron bars ensuring he is locked away from her forever. This continues in *Peter Pan*, as Peter's closest attempt at securing a parental figure lies in his ability to persuade young girls to follow him to The Neverland and uptake the female role. Peter returns for Jane later, showing that his search is narrow and a father figure is not part of the end goal. Therefore, whilst Peter will never complete his sexual development, he also fails to secure the male role model position that Freud claims would help him secure his individuality, including his gender identity.

Peter struggles to cement his identity as a character, as he deals with the young/old binary from a different position to Andrew in *Better Dead.* Whilst the society of which Andrew is a part separates individuals according to the year in which they were born, Peter's character would technically be the oldest in the novel if the same rule was to be applied. So, what makes

Peter forever young? Why is his mind unaffected by the years of life experience he gains? In a conversation between Peter and Wendy that ensues in a chapter entitled 'The Happy Home', they play make-believe, and Wendy asks Peter to pretend to be her husband and father to their children:

> She went to him and put her hand on his shoulder.
> 'Dear Peter,' she said, 'with such a large family, of course, I have now passed my best, but you don't want to [ex]change me, do you?'
> 'No, Wendy.'
> Certainly he did not want a change, but he looked at her uncomfortably, blinking, you know, like one not sure whether he was awake or asleep.
> 'Peter, what is it?'
> 'I was just thinking,' he said, a little scared. 'It is only make-believe, isn't it, that I am their father?'
> 'Oh yes,' Wendy said primly.
> 'You see,' he continued apologetically, 'it would make me seem so old to be their real father.'
> 'But they are ours, Peter, yours and mine.' 'But not really, Wendy?' he asked anxiously.
> 'Not if you don't wish it,' she replied; and she distinctly heard his sigh of relief. (Barrie 2012, pp. 136-137)

During the interaction between the two, Peter refers to Wendy as an 'old lady' twice, ensuring that the boundaries are established regardless of whether the conversation is based on truth or pretence. However, he repeatedly interrupts Wendy, asking her for reassurance that once the game is over, he will be rid of any responsibilities, with Wendy on the other hand making the effort to put her all into the role play. Within one conversation, two children exhibit completely contrasting reactions to the idea of growing up, with Peter's amounting to a sigh of relief when he realises that his so-called responsibilities are temporary.

With Barrie showing undeniable concrete understanding of psychoanalytical theories,

it can be concluded that he was aware of Freud's work, and the similarities between the two individuals begin to show once again when looking at the young/old binary, with both Barrie and Freud exhibiting through words their apprehension towards the aging process. Ernest Jones, a life-long friend of Freud's, described the unrelenting mental torment the topic caused for Freud:

> Now, in Freud's personality there were several features of note in his attitude toward the topic of death … As far back as we know anything of his life he seems to have been prepossessed by thoughts about death … he had the disconcerting habit of parting with the words 'Goodbye; you may never see me again' … He hated growing old, even as early as his forties, and as he did so the thoughts of death became increasingly clamorous. He once said he thought of it every day of his life, which is certainly unusual. (Jones 1957, p. 279)

Although Jones claims that Freud also showed interest in death, he provided a clear distinction between young and old by conducting his studies on young minds, and repeatedly claiming he did not want to die before his own mother, as the natural order of life should dictate. Jones also recalls an interaction he shared with Freud, where he learned that even when the years had progressed and Freud was showing physical signs of ageing, his mind showed no indication of the same deterioration, 'I found Freud somewhat greyer and a good deal thinner than before the war; he never regained his former plump figure. But his mind had lost nothing of its alertness' (Jones 1957, p. 16). Thus, the line between young and old holds more than can be told from physical appearances: Barrie himself was of a smaller stature, resembling a boy. So, what does the creation of a boy who has lived for many years, yet whose mind has not evolved and developed in accordance with the number of years he has been alive, say about Barrie's depiction of the young/old binary? If Peter Pan has escaped both physical and mental development, the answer must lie in his permanent childhood.

With Freud developing many theories on the consequences of incomplete and

interrupted childhood sexual development on when an individual becomes an adult, Peter's ability to retain his youth is aided by the lack of responsibilities and worries which those twice his age start to experience. Jones claims, 'Freud's discovery that the sexual attitudes and peculiarities of the adult are derived from variations in the sexual development during childhood, including the relationship between child and parent' (Jones 1957, p. 440). These sexual attitudes cause an abundance of stress due to sexual preferences and the anxiety around social expectations. However, as they only come into play during adulthood, they cannot have long term effects on a child who has not fully sexually developed, nor has their id, ego and superego established a balance. Therefore, with the use of Freud's theories, the young can be separated from the old in a character who has lived longer than everyone else yet fails to mature.

Hence, Barrie's utilisation of binaries creates a significant gap separating the different stages of life, whilst also blurring the line that separates gender identity. Peter Pan embodies a child whose development has halted, both physically and mentally, whilst the other characters in his novels such as Tommy, Andrew, and Captain W, go through life learning from their experiences, which shape and define the values on which their conscience depends. Peter also represents a gender-fluid character, one who resists categorisation as the boy who remains oblivious to the nature of the growing admiration aimed towards him by the young female characters in the novel. Wendy's value is placed on her ability to zone in on the relative side of the girl/woman when needed by Peter to fulfil her motherly role as a result of 'the rigid ideologies of the Victorian era' that were placed on female characters that ultimately 'pressurise their sense of girlhood from the outset' (Dillon 2019). Overall, binaries in these novels appear as representations and depictions of life through a child's eyes; to a child, becoming an adult seems like a foreign notion, almost as if childhood and adulthood are an entirely separate unrelated concept – which is reality for Peter, whereas for children, gender, wealth, and power are irrelevant when it comes to building relationships. Ultimately, the

exploration of binaries in his novels prove Barrie's adult characters would benefit profoundly from the wholesomeness of a child's perception on life, taking life each day as it comes being their true authentic self – dress included – whilst also receiving each person they meet at face value, not worrying about the judgement and scrutiny of others until their last day.

# Chapter 7 ‘To Die Will Be an Awfully Big Adventure’: The Transcendence of Time in The Neverland

> Will they reach the nursery in time? If so, how delightful for them, and we shall all breathe a sigh of relief, but there will be no story. On the other hand, if they are not in time, I solemnly promise that it will all come right in the end. (Barrie 2012, p. 48)

The phenomenon of time is a universal concept that impacts on all of humanity, with each minute that passes marking a transient instant that will only be accessible for years to come through memories. The previous chapters have drawn attention to Barrie’s pessimism in terms of adulthood, stirred by the weight of the responsibilities that accompany it. However, it can be concluded that this attitude is prompted by the daily reminder of the faint ticking of a clock, ensuring that any individual who tries to escape these intruding thoughts is unable to do so. Can anyone promise the future if every moment is determined by consequential interactions, with thought-out plans seldom finding their path to completion? Barrie, however, seems to think he can in *Peter Pan*, but only if the children do not reach their temporal destination as adults. This chapter investiages this nature of endings in Barrie’s texts, highlighting the distinction he draws between the end of childhood and the end of life. From *The Little White Bird*, one is shown that when the iron bars keep Peter away from returning to his mother and continuing his life as her son, it is not the tragedy one would expect it to be, as it demarcates the beginning of his story, one that has no ending.

Peter’s concept of time is seen in direct contrast to other characters in Barrie’s novels, showing the extremity of perception between characters in different stages of their lives. Barrie himself made several comments in diary entries, and in references in *Margaret Ogilvy*, that stand as examples of the effect that the weight the impermanence of time has on him. In the

memoir, he mentions the burden was one that troubled him even in childhood, as he claims he always knew his time would come when he would have to pack up his toys forever (Barrie 2014 p. 10). Birkin even asserts that Barrie was 'a man seemingly convinced that the end of boyhood is the end of life worth living— 'nothing that happens after we are twelve matters very much' (Birkin 2003, p. 38), echoing the themes that surround the characters affected by the ephemeral nature of life. Birkin includes an extract from *The Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, where Barrie immortalises his cousin Charlie by writing a story based on a boy named Peterkin. The child is described as watching the clock, waiting for his next kicking from the narrator. Regardless of the nature of their relationship, Peterkin eagerly awaits this interaction at eight o'clock, happy to be on the receiving end of any kind of attention he can possibly obtain, 'he said that eight o'clock was longer in coming round than any other time of the day, and he frequently offered me chocolate to kick him in advance' (Birkin 2003, p. 63). This correlates with reality for Barrie, as he frequently sought affection from his mother, facing rejection each time but persevering, nonetheless. For both Peterkin and young Barrie, time is a symbol for the waiting period, the purgatory, between pleasant moments in life, and as the characters get older, this perception changes drastically.

Unlike his other novels, whilst he displays several examples of his apprehension towards the temporal nature of time, Freud did not construct a primary theory based around it; he utilised it as a crutch when discussing other theories such as the death drive and the stages of sexual development. In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle,* Freud discusses Kant's theory on space and time:

> At this point I shall venture to touch for a moment upon a subject which would merit the most exhaustive treatment. As a result of certain psycho-analytic discoveries, we are to-day in a position to embark on a discussion of the Kantian theorem that time and space are 'necessary forms of thought'. We have learnt that unconscious mental processes are in themselves 'timeless'. This means in the first place that they are not

> ordered temporally that time does not change them in any way and that the idea of time cannot be applied to them. These are negative characteristics which can only be clearly understood if a comparison is made with conscious mental processes. (Freud 1961, p. 22)

Kant claimed that time was a form of one's inner sense, and space characterises the form of one's outer self, with each having a ripple effect on each other, 'without time, we could not comprehend the possibility of change and thus relate successive states of affairs and our judgments about them to one another' (Tizzard 2016, p. 640). Kelly Noel-Smith claimed the above quote was the inspiration she needed to create her book *Freud on Time and Timelessness*, published in 2016. In the introductory pages, she draws attention to the recurring theme of temporality in Freud's work, which can be seen in 'the timeless unconscious, the endless repetition compulsion and the process of consciousness, remembering and working through' (Noel-Smith 2016, p. 1). She continues to elaborate on each, coming to the realisation that it is much more difficult to find a concept of psychoanalysis that does not revolve around time, than it is to find one that does.

The same can be argued for Barrie and his work, with the passing of time giving an award-worthy supporting performance throughout each novel. Barrie's fixation on the number six stems from its connection to moments of time, from the sixth hour on the clock to the age he was when he unknowingly reached the final stage of his short childhood. Noel-Smith shares this in common with Barrie, with the same number representing a pivotal moment in her lifetime, where life became more than a daily routine of mischief and wonder. She states in her preface to her book, 'on my sixth birthday, I realised that … I had a maximum of 94 years left … and counting. I understood profoundly the inevitability of my death and … that ever-decreasing time was left to me before it took place' (Noel-Smith 2016, p. vii). Whilst she struggled with the uncontrollable nature of time, she admits the issue followed her to adulthood, igniting a fire in her that would be lit by Freud himself and his contribution to the examination

of time. Thus, Barrie may also have attempted to grab a hold of time, but in a more distinctive move than Noel-Smith, he created a fictional location where time has lost all the properties it is known to possess in reality.

A quick search of the word 'time' in *Margaret Ogilvy* shows how it appears on nearly every page of the memoir, and in some cases, several times on the same page. In the opening pages of the text, 'time' is mentioned three times on page five, and twenty times in total by the tenth page. The word becomes more frequent towards the end of the book, coinciding with Barrie's mother's demise. He recalls one occasion where time was at its most significant, one of his last interactions with his mother before he left for Switzerland where he would later be informed of her death:

> In the night my mother might waken and sit up in bed, confused by what she saw. While she slept, six decades or more had rolled back and she was again in her girlhood; suddenly recalled from it she was dizzy, as with the rush of the years … sometimes the knocking seemed to belong to the past, and she would cry, 'That is my father chapping at the door, I maun rise and let him in.' She seemed to see him—and it was one much younger than herself that she saw—covered with snow, kicking clods of it from his boots, his hands swollen and chapped with sand and wet … she had many preparations on her mind, and the morning was the time when she had any strength to carry them out. (Barrie 2014, pp. 72-73)

The passage is filled with uncertainty, as Barrie uses words such as 'sometimes' and 'seemed', conveying a theme of hesitation as the past reminds the reader of how much there is to lose when the clock cannot be stopped. He continues, using words such as 'last', 'never' and 'done' as the paragraph begins to scream finality and last chances are imminent:

> Less exhaustively, but with much of the old exultation in her house, this was done for the last time, and then there was the bringing out of her own clothes, and the spreading of them upon the bed and the pleased fingering of them, and the consultations about which should be left behind. Ah, beautiful dream! I clung to it every morning; I would

> not look when my sister shook her head at it, but long before each day was done I too knew that it could never be. It had come true many times, but never again. We two knew it, but when my mother, who must always be prepared so long beforehand, called for her trunk and band-boxes we brought them to her, and we stood silent, watching, while she packed. (Barrie 2014, pp. 72-73)

Within the perimeters of two pages, Barrie encourages the reader to return to a time where they are at their happiest, as his mother, tormented by grief, finds solace in the past, by using words such as 'for the last time', and 'left behind', to convey this sense of finality. However, he also touches upon several Freudian theories whilst he describes his mother's reminiscences. The paragraph begins with Mrs Ogilvy awakening from a deep sleep, unable to decipher reality from fantasy, real life from pretence or past from present. This continues as the preparations for the day ahead occupy a vast majority of her mind, mirroring Mrs. Darling in *Peter Pan*, who tidies her children's minds with the intentions of establishing a routine for those around her.

The paragraph then returns to the idea of dreams, and the recipient of the 'beautiful dream' (Barrie 2014, p. 72), as Barrie now connects his overwhelming sense of reality to the attractive prospect of dream fulfilment, remaining hopeful by ignoring his sister's telling gestures, yet his mind was constantly in battle with itself, as it was interrupted by his infuriating tendency to be realistic in such sombre circumstances. Hence, although neither Freud nor Barrie put it in print, both of their works can be analysed to show in-depth understandings and thoughts on the passing of time and its relevance and impact on daily life. Gregory Zilboorg, in his introduction to Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, writes in relation to Freud, 'since it is not in anyone's power to slow down or to accelerate the salutary passage of time, it cannot be the ambition of this writer to attempt to do so' (Freud 1961, p. xiii). Both men clearly knew time waited for no man or woman, which may have widely impacted them directly due to its unavoidable power over them.

In Barrie's case, it became more than a concept when he witnessed the death of many young people far before their time, resulting in the creation of his first novel *Better Dead,* which oozed pessimism and was packed with references to death and self-justified homicide. Similarly, Freud went on to develop a theory based on the death drive, an instinct that he claimed all organisms possessed, which compels them to have a tendency towards self-destruction, repeating behaviours that are unpleasant regardless of how it feels at the time, 'if we are to take it as a truth that knows no exception that everything living dies for internal reasons becomes inorganic once again then we shall be compelled to say that the aim of all life is death', (Freud 1961, p. 32) and, looking backwards, that 'inanimate things existed before living ones' (Freud 1961, p. 32). Thus, these recurring themes of death and self-destruction go together with the daunting hollow noise of the ticking of a clock in an empty room, realistically representing a countdown towards the end for everyone, 'there was not even a clock in the room to break the silence' (Barrie 2018, p. 44).

With *Better Dead*'s core theme of pessimism towards ageing overflowing from one page to the next, the references to time follow suit, with the narrator outlining the impermanence of time on several occasions, 'in this way much time was lost' (Barrie 2018, p. 52), 'there was no time to be lost; but Andrew dallied' (Barrie 2018, p. 57), 'some time was lost in getting round Sir William' (Barrie 2018, p. 57). Each of these references to the loss of time and the urgency of the matter appear in the last quarter of the book. This is in comparison to the slightly more optimistic, 'if time permitted' (Barrie 2018, p. 2), and more accepting, 'when his time is out' (Barrie 2018, p. 4) approach that can be seen in the opening pages. Within the perimeter of the novel's opening pages, a mention of protagonist Andrew experiencing some form of emotion that is not immediately described as negative is accompanied by a measurement of time. This reiterates the temporary nature of life, 'for the moment there was almost some expression in his face, and he suffered from a determination of

words to the mouth' (Barrie 2018, p. 3), and 'for the moment there was a majesty about him that was foreign to his usual bearing. Andrew was touched, and gripped his hand' (Barrie 2018, p. 5). However, as the story progresses, these depictions of brief moments of emotion begin to be wrapped up in Andrew's life, regardless of the nature of them, as Barrie shows the transience of each moment, 'at Charing Cross he seemed for a moment at a loss …. It was now for the first time that a strange notion illumined Andrew's brain. It bewildered him, and left him in darkness the next moment' (Barrie 2018, p. 14).

Another interesting technique used by Barrie within the novel is the narrator's attention to detail when referring to these moments in time. By observing other characters talking for 'an hour and five minutes' (Barrie 2018, p. 31), and gazing in a shop window for twenty minutes (Barrie 2018, p. 14), the narrator forces the reader to take notice of his specific measurements of time. This is reminiscent of Barrie's own childhood, where he uses his memoir of his mother to pinpoint monumental incidents, whilst recalling the exact time on the clock face when these occurred. Shipley notes the theme of time that appears in Barrie's work is relevant not only to himself and his childhood, but also the lives of the Davies boys:

> Some of the themes evidenced in the Peter Pan stories demonstrate the tragedy that existed in the Davies young boys' lives, losing both their mother and father while they were all young. Impermanence, death, innocence, and running out of time all correlate to the early years of the Davies boys and the stories that Barrie told them while they were growing up. (Shipley 2012, p. 153)

Thus, when one looks deeper into the words in the novel, uncovering the meaning behind them, the daunting impermanency of childhood and the even more perturbing permanency of adulthood when it begins is an obvious preoccupation for the author. In *Better Dead,* the narrator's attitude changes from uncertainty towards what it means to grow old, to a definitive sense of gloom surrounding life's transience. This theme continues throughout his other novels, as the clock continues to remind the reader that each second passing is another second

towards a life full of judgement, responsibilities, and heartbreak, ultimately leading everyone towards their destination, namely the end of life. Thus, the novel's title, whilst soaked in satire, is indicative of what is to come once you open the cover page.

Comparing Barrie's *Peter Pan* with Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*, Naomi Rokotnitz draws the reader's attention to a section of de Silentio's epilogue to this piece, where he creates a division between two types of children. The first, is a child who involves themselves in games, impatiently finishing and looking for the next source of entertainment to engage their minds. The second, is a child who learns how to use and adapt the game, so it lasts most of the day:

> I would like to address this query by going back to the beginning of each individual—to childhood. In the epilogue of Fear and Trembling, Johannes de Silentio calls to mind children on holiday, who 'get through all their games by noon and then ask impatiently, 'Can't anyone think of a new game?' He contrasts these children with those who can make the games they know 'last for a whole day' … He then shifts metaphor to explain that the task of living with passion and with faith is not 'a children's disease which one must hope to get over as soon as possible' (163). Rather, it is task enough for an entire 'human lifetime' (Rokotnitz 2021, p. 210)

Whilst *Fear and Trembling* is largely based on faith, and subsequently, the loss of it, Freudian theories also focus on specific periods of time in an individual's life, whilst delving into what is missing, and into what the human mind needs to be content in life, and what 'disease one must hope to get over as soon as possible' (Rokotnitz 2021, p. 210). Rokotnitz also highlights the correlation between both pieces of work by emphasising the condition of the passing of time on children. Additionally, the division of two types of children may hold more relevance to Barrie than this work had initially claimed. Looking at Barrie's childhood, it is almost impossible to determine which category he fell into, whether he played all day contently, or had searched for other sources of distraction. This is due to his short-lived childhood caused by

family tragedy. However, as an adult who was known to repeatedly write supposed fictitious novels that were soaked in biographical tones, Barrie's *Peter Pan* presented a child who found his own source of amusement for an immeasurable number of years. Whilst Barrie's story fed into the well-known phrase 'time flies when you're having fun', he also added an exception to the drawback of time passing by so quickly, eradicating the loss that comes with time, causing it to have no effect on the boy himself.

Whilst *Better Dead* from the title alone, provides an obvious interpretation of Barrie's mind-set and attitude towards life in the late 1800s, his later work takes more analysis to uncover the hidden themes and values that lie within. *Sentimental Tommy,* published in 1896, follows the lead of Barrie's theme of telling titles, with Tommy indulging in the wonders of life that surround him, and reminiscing on daily events as he grows and progresses through each stage of his life, leading into the sequel novel *Tommy and Grizel*, where his adulthood is then followed from page to page. Tommy found himself, from an early age, conforming to the ideals of society, and adjusting his manner and principles in a desperate attempt to avoid disparagement from the people around him. To research the word 'sentimental', shows a constellation of similar key words, 'nostalgia', 'feelings', 'reminiscence', and 'sadness', all of which in an abundance, can have a negative impact on an individual. Green discusses this case of sentimentality:

> This sentimentality is deliberately defined against the idealism championed in his previous novels. It originates, as he shows, in what might be called a 'negative' idealism, the desire to avoid unappetising truths. As a poor child in London, Tommy picks up the habit of make-believe from his mother as a way of dealing with unpleasantness … In his preparatory notebooks, Barrie kept returning to this 'negative' idealism as a distinguishing feature of the sentimentalist. 'He preferred misery to be kept out of sight,' he writes in one note, and then again: 'True sentimentalist one who won't look unpleasantness in face—half convinces himself they are not there.' (Green 2017, p. 192)

These 'unappetising truths' become a recurring theme in Barrie's novels, indicative of his personal experiences. Whilst the unpleasantries of Tommy's life are apparent within the opening paragraph of the novel, his specified sentimentality alludes to a deeper perception of fortune and lack of it, which coincides with his inability to change certain aspects of life that are all marked by a moment in time. Tommy's escape throughout his childhood is make-believe; he can pretend he is well fed to avoid passing glances and judgement, however, what is left for him as an adult if the sound of the clock prompts the oncoming realisation that whilst adults can still pretend, reality comes knocking much sooner than it did when you were only a boy.

Freud suggests that this constant refusal to accept the reality of an event due to the pain and trauma it causes to an individual is a form of defence mechanism called denial, 'the mechanism which is at the basis of human sacrifices—ascribing to others what one is repressing— was revealed and the barrier, the "censorship" or "defense," was to be installed inside everyone' (Mannoni 2015, p. 52). Whilst the foundation of Barrie's life was reduced to defence mechanisms in a bid to protect himself from the trauma that followed him from childhood to adulthood, the process of make-believe became his most trusted form of resistance against the passing of time. Tommy, like Barrie, experienced denial in its strongest mode from the closest person to him: his mother showed the impression a mother's attitude can have on a child unbeknownst to them, 'his mother heard of this and was angry, crying that he had let the neighbors know something she was anxious to conceal' (Barrie 2007, p. 1). Throughout the novel, this theme of pretending always hovered close-by to a specific time, 'you could pass hours in pretending to fear that when the morning came there would be no fairyland. And all the time you knew … about ten o'clock' (Barrie 2007, p. 122).

Whilst Barrie's characters represent projections of Barrie himself, the distinction between Tommy and Peter Pan becomes obvious here. Tommy repeatedly reaches for make-

believe, his reliable method of escape. However, as a human, he will forever be subject to the burdens that accompany reality. Thus, one can see a development in the avatars that Barrie created, as Peter Pan's character adapts to rectify and eradicate the persistent worries Tommy experiences. Thus, for Tommy, with childhood came the pretend world; however, his mothers' denial at the beginning of the novel hinted at the depth of denial, as its intention surpasses the innocent child-like nature that can be seen in Tommy as he plays with Grizel, which then also follows him through to adulthood. Perhaps the primary contribution to *Peter Pan*'s conception came from Barrie's recognition that surfaced in Tommy's character, showing that even denial and pretend can only temporarily protect the mind, and thus fails to prevent oneself from experiencing the overwhelming realisation that everyone will grow old.

As Tommy becomes an adult in *Tommy and Grizel*, and within the first few chapters, the recurring themes that can be seen in *Better Dead* begin to resurface. During a conversation with Pym, with whom he co-wrote a story, Pym gets angered by Tommy's interference with his part of the tale. Tommy decided to change the women Pym created, making them more 'human' so that 'fathers might now have taken a lesson from T. Sandy's in the upbringing of their daughters' (Barrie 2009, p. 12). The narrator then tells the reader that Elspeth 'feared he was becoming too good to live' (Barrie 2009, p. 12), a direct comparison to the morals of the members of the S.D.W.S.P. in *Better Dead*, and Pym decides to read a passage of Tommy's work:

> He read another passage: 'It was the last half-hour of day when I was admitted, with several others, to look upon my friend's dead face. A handkerchief had been laid over it. I raised the handkerchief. I know not what the others were thinking, but the last time we met he had told me something, it was not much only that no woman had ever kissed him. It seemed to me that, as I gazed, the wistfulness came back to his face. I whispered to a woman who was present, and stooping over him, she was about to but her eyes were dry, and I stopped her. The handkerchief was replaced, and all left the room save myself. Again I raised the handkerchief. I cannot tell you how innocent he looked.'

'Who was he?' asked Pym. 'Nobody,' said Tommy. (Barrie 2009, pp. 14-15)

In this passage one sees a representation of all of the woes and burdens of Barrie's life. Firstly, Tommy succumbs to the devastation of witnessing the dead body of someone he loved. He then explains how the friend had never embraced a woman, and concluded that he looked innocent as he lay there, void of the feeling of reciprocated love. Like Barrie, Tommy tries to assert it was far from important, despite the fact it is leaning on him as he stands over the cold, pale body hounded by the fact that his time cut short means he never will experience this emotion. Finally, when Pym asks who the friend is, Tommy fails to say his name. He is a nobody, as Barrie worried he would also be as he struggled to accept the fact he could not have a sexual relationship with a woman. Towards the mid-section of the novel, Tommy echoes this worry as he recognises his incapability of loving Grizel and exclaims, 'no, but I thought so much of myself once, and now I am nobody at all. At first it distressed me, and then I was glad, for it makes you everything and me nothing' (Barrie 2009, p. 118). With the passing of time, Tommy both realises the dead man was no more of a nobody than he is himself as they share one commonality when it comes to love. The difference between the two is that Tommy is still alive and has the opportunity to change his fate, but he simply cannot do so. Whilst his friend's last conversation with him highlighted the plight he carried in life, his death stirs an emotion of relatability in Tommy, who struggles to reciprocate Grizel's love for him – without love, forming a family with a wife and children was unachievable and thus, these moments in life were a constant reminder of the simpler times dealt with through a simpler mind-set in *Sentimental Tommy*.

The attribute of innocence in unison with death is another intriguing aspect of Barrie's writing in this novel, connecting the beginning and end stages of life. Barrie focused a vast amount of time on developing the eternally innocent character Peter Pan; however, novels like *Sentimental Tommy, Tommy and Grizel* and *Better Dead,* hold subtle allusions connecting

virtue to dying. The resistance to change floats within the pages nearby whenever innocence is mentioned by Barrie, 'I don't want to be a man (Barrie 2012, p. 106), implying that a halt of development of the human mind in childhood would not diminish certain issues, however, they would free adults of the burdens, struggles and anxieties of repressed memories they experience daily. Freud claimed in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*:

> It is tempting to pursue to its logical conclusion the hypothesis that all instincts tend towards the restoration of an earlier state of things. The outcome may give an impression of mysticism or of sham profundity; but we can feel quite innocent of having had any such purpose in view … the elementary living entity would from its very beginning have had no wish to change. (Freud 1961, pp. 61-62)

If according to Freud, all living things have an inherent instinct to return to the beginning, then there is an abundance of significance in the innocent impression 'nobody' gives off as he lies there lifeless. He seems to have completed the circle of life, finishing right back where he began, in a state of innocence. Furthermore, the correlation between asexuality and innocence is one that can be seen in Barrie's *Peter Pan*, however, one can see a glimpse of this theme through Tommy's conversation with Pym. Whilst it is impossible to deduce whether the man was asexual or whether he simply missed the opportunity to love, and keeping in mind Barrie's attempt to thinly mask his feelings in his fictional novels, it can be concluded that 'nobody' may have struggled with an uncertainty surrounding his sexuality like Barrie may have. Hyun-Joo Yoo describes Peter Pan as 'a sexually innocent boy, unaffected by and unresponsive to the feminine sexuality expressed by the female characters, because he has to remain an uncorrupted, pure child forever' (Yoo 2019, pp. 394-395). Yoo continues by saying that for Peter to show physical desire, he would be showing signs of sexual maturity, thus sacrificing his childhood innocence (Yoo 2019, p. 395). Thus, as Tommy stops a woman who was in the room from leaning towards his friend to give him a kiss, he realises the depth of the matter at hand: by avoiding sexual pleasure for all of his life, how can he be described as anything other

than innocent in his final state. Therefore, through this scene, Barrie reiterates the theory previously discussed in Chapter 5, that sexual maturation is a fundamental part of the loss of childhood innocence and without the completed process, 'nobody' embodied this childhood innocence in death.

By the time Barrie wrote *Peter Pan,* it became apparent through his previous novels that the passing of time and imminence of death were concepts that caused great distress for the writer. Tommy's constant awareness of the impermanence of life was evidently a projection of Barrie's personal battles, and thus created a direct and obvious distinction between Tommy, a boy subject to time, and Peter, a boy who will never be a man. Hence, it comes as no surprise that his next novel *Peter Pan* was crammed with magical elements in a place that is home to a boy who never grows up. However, Barrie did not focus on completely eradicating the elements of daily life that cause distress; instead he removed the severity of the stresses of life that ultimately will always lead towards the finality of death for an individual. Hyun-Joo Yoo writes about Barrie's use of paradox to separate the characters within The Neverland, and the opposing attitudes that can also be seen:

> In conclusion, Barrie seems to end up creating another modern world plagued with war, death, and violence against the Other in his imaginative world … Peter and the other boys in The Neverland are paradoxical creatures characterized by contradictory traits. Peter is innocent, immortal, sexually naive, faithful, imaginative, brave, and full of joy, but is also manipulative, lawless, callous, controlling, and violent. In the same breath, like Peter, the boys are innocent and courageous, but at the same time, they are cruel and heartless. (Yoo 2019, pp. 402-203).

Here, Yoo highlights the opposing traits that Barrie utilises within each character, showing Peter and the boys' ability to show innocence and callousness within a few scenes. The common factor here, is the characters' stage of life, as they are all still in their youth. He continues:

> In addition to that, The Neverland is not described from one single perspective: It is a very delightful, magical, and colourful place overflowing with joy and enthusiasm, while it is an extremely dangerous, frightening place crowded with malicious pirates. Killing and death are considered simply part of the children's games in The Neverland, and sadness and fear, along with excitement and enjoyment, are the dominant moods. (Yoo 2019, pp. 402-403).

The extremities Yoo refers to here are once again attributed to a place that is based on childhood wishes. As Yoo mentions, Barrie does not avoid the reality of murder and death by constructing a complete fantastical ideal of a perfect world. In fact, the novel *Peter Pan* does just the opposite in terms of avoiding the topic. A quick comparison of *Peter Pan* and Barrie's satirical and pessimistic novel *Better Dead*, stands as proof of this, with *Peter Pan's* pages becoming illuminated with results from a simple search of the words 'death', 'dying' and 'kill', whilst the pages of *Better Dead* exhibit a much smaller sample. Furthermore, whilst Andrew in *Better Dead* reclaims or possibly discovers his conscience by the end of the novel, Yoo claims the reason for Peter's lack of remorse comes from his immaturity, 'without feeling any responsibility for the past, Peter does not show the slightest bit of remorse or guilt for what he has done to others … Peter also cares little about the future' (Yoo 2019, p. 390). Therefore, by establishing a permanency of immaturity in Peter, Barrie eradicates the severity of the consequences around death.

When one investigates Freud's theory on narcissism and its connection to the death-drive, Yoo's ideas previously mentioned can be solidified from a psychoanalytical point of view. Peter's permanent innocence causes an undeniable ignorance about the world around him, from the female characters around him showing obvious interest in him, to the flippant manner he adopts when speaking about the sanctity of life, specifically other lives. Freud, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, spoke about the character-trait that is selfishness, its implications when it comes to sexual relationships, and the sadism that results from it, a death-

instinct that is separated from the ego. In this book, he addressed both the life instinct which is referred to as Eros, and the death instinct, Thanatos. Eros concerns itself with the basic instincts of survival and preservation, hunger, thirst, sex and love. Thanatos, however, revolves around the drive towards destruction, including aggressive behaviour and the tendency to relive traumatic episodes. In the following paragraph, Freud talks about both instincts and their interdependence on each other as they fight to create a healthy balance within individuals:

> In the obscurity that at present shrouds the theory of instinct, we shall certainly not do well to reject any idea that promises to throw light. We have made the antithesis between the life and death instincts our point of departure. Object-love itself displays a second such polarity, that of love (tenderness) and hate (aggression). What if we could succeed in bringing these two polarities into relation with each other, in tracing the one to the other! We have long recognised a sadistic component of the sexual instinct: it can, as we know, attain independence, and as a perversion, dominate the whole sexual trend of a person. In one of the organisations which I have termed 'pregenital' it appears as a dominating part-instinct. But how is one to derive the sadistic impulse, which aims at the injury of the object, from the life-sustaining Eros! Does not the assumption suggest itself that this sadism is properly a death-instinct which is driven apart from the ego by the influence of the narcissistic libido, so that it becomes manifest only in reference to the object? (Freud 2017, p. 2122)

Mirroring Yoo's acknowledgement of unbalanced drives at work in a character, Freud elaborates on the topic of the life and death instinct. After establishing the dichotomy of the two drives, he continues, explaining the role of sexual development when an instinct is directed away from the ego by the narcissistic libido, as it moves towards a sexual function:

> It then enters the service of the sexual function; at the oral stage of organisation of the libido, amorous possession is still one and the same as annihilation of the object; later the sadistic impulse separates itself, and at last at the stage of the genital primacy it takes over with the aim of propagation the function of so far overpowering the sex-object as the carrying out of the sexual act demands. One might even say that the sadism

> expelled from the ego has acted as guide to the libidinous components of the sexual instinct; these later press on towards the object. Where the original sadism experiences no abatement or fusion, the well-known hate-love ambivalence of the love-life is set up. If the above assumption is justifiable then we have met the challenge of demonstrating an example of a death-instinct — though a displaced one. This conception, however, is far from being evident, and creates a frankly mystical impression. (Freud 2017, pp. 2122-2123)

Once again, psychosexual development plays a significant role in the daily life of an individual. Here, Freud exhibits the importance of each stage of sexual maturity, as the instinct begins with self-absorbed intentions and morphs as it passes through each stage, so it can strive to surpass narcissistic in nature to become selfless in intention.

Yoo explains how Peter Pan is a character who embodies narcissism, as he is introduced and remains in a state of selfishness, constantly searching for a means to satisfy his urges that revolve around self-pleasure and gratification. As each page progresses, his immaturity is juxtaposed with the other children who are developing every day: 'Peter was a little annoyed with them for knowing so much, but if he wanted to lord it over them his triumph was at hand' (Barrie 2012, p. 55). As a boy, evidently, he has not (and will not ever according to Barrie), fulfilled the five stages of sexual development, meaning that he will always remain, trapped in one specific phase, with Barrie using numerous opportunities to show his immaturity and innocence, further clarifying the boy's halted state is not limited to physically. Thus, the clash between Eros and Thanatos fails to establish a balance that needs to be created to live a healthy and poised life. For Peter, his arrested development means he will not be engaging in adult sexual relations and licentiousness thus sacrificing his childhood innocence and accepting adult responsibilities (Yoo 2019, p. 395). At the other end of the argument, the man who created Peter may have bequeathed him with this eternal innocence as an instrument to combat the injustices of the world, a world where 'white imperial desire, which is destructive, violent, and crude, is concealed in and disguised as a child's asexuality or sexual purity' (Yoo 2019, p. 395), thus,

Barrie's Peter can be seen as the epitome of a coping mechanism to combat the weight of severe situations.

Barrie's *Peter Pan* opens with a mention of the passing of time in the first sentence, as the novel tells the reader, 'all children, except one, grow up' (Barrie 2012, p. 1), immediately separating all of humanity, conditioned by time, from Peter and his immortality. He continues, explaining how Wendy first discovered she would also grow old, claiming that it dawned on her at the tender age of two, and pessimistically denoting that after reaching two years old, it is 'the beginning of the end' (Barrie 2012, p. 1). Thus, the first paragraph of *Peter Pan* makes it difficult to deduce anything other than Barrie's cynicism towards the ageing process from his impactful introductory words. However, whilst the novel follows the boy with eternal youth, the negative undertones follow suit as the paragraphs progress. Leading onto page two of the opening chapter, the narrator tells the reader in reference to Mr. Darling of his winning over Mrs. Darling's heart, but not the 'innermost box and kiss' (Barrie 2012, p. 2) that she possessed. He continues, 'he never knew about the box, and in time he gave up trying for the kiss' (Barrie 2012, p. 2), keeping to the overarching worry regarding wasted time by suggesting Mr. Darling soon tired of trying with Mrs. Darling.

With the unavoidability of the passing of time being an established theme from the beginning of the novel, Barrie wastes no time addressing the inevitable result that accompanies it by writing about death, 'children have the strangest adventures without being troubled… they may remember to mention, a week after the event happened, that when they were in the wood they had met their dead father and had a game with him' (Barrie 2012, p. 10). Here, he not only addresses the end of life, but he utilises it in a setting that also involves an individual at the beginning of theirs. By doing so, Barrie constructs a scenario of polar opposites, depicting a scene of two extremely significant stages of ageing, once again, avoiding any mention of the middle stage of life in order to set the foundation for a compromised state of 'betwixt-and-

between' (Barrie 2019, p. 101). Additionally, the component of fun further added to the tone of the initial mention of death, where Barrie claims that the children had played a game with the deceased family member whom they met in the wood. Combining childhood innocence and imagination with a gentle nod to the release of energy after death, Barrie establishes a balance of morbidity and purity by acknowledging that the overwhelming burden that accompanies dying is rooted in the adult stage of life, and when the end comes, it fails to find the rationalisation it requires to justify the torment experienced.

As it was mentioned in previous chapters, Barrie displayed an undeniable grasp of psychoanalytical theories and concepts. In Chapter 3, I wrote about oneiric phenomena and their key to the unconscious. I also discussed the Oedipus Complex, an idea on which Freud based many of his theories on childhood development. Whilst Freud highlighted the subconscious feelings of distain towards the parent of the opposite sex, he also claimed these emotions can accumulate to resulting in death wishes towards the specific parent:

> One particular case of such public symbolism in myth deserves special attention because of its centrality and because Freud's position is so often misunderstood. When, in *The Interpretation of Dreams,* he discusses the theme of death wishes unconsciously felt by children toward a parent, he alludes to Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex,* it is neither to see the play as a manifestation of Sophocles' psychology, nor yet to examine Oedipus' own supposed motives and psychodynamics. It is, rather, to show how the play serves as a collective, publicly constituted fantasy that corresponds to the unconscious incestuous and rivalrous fantasies harbored by each member of the audience as repressed residues of childhood. (Freud & Neu 2008, p. 268)

Here, Neu talks about Freud's use of Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* as a method to instil an emotional reaction in the audience that resonates with repressed childhood memories. Thus, it can be concluded that Barrie's introduction of death in *Peter Pan* takes a similar route, showing the aftermath of the materialisation of the wish at hand. For the child, life carries on, the world continues, and their greatest concern involves the next game in which they will partake. For

the parent, they have suffered the hardest feat, their life is now over. It is not until the child grows up when they must give up the games (Barrie 2014, p. 10) that the repressed memories begin to resurface. Hence, Barrie ascertains that to remain in that bubble of protection from the outside world is the ultimate shield from the encumbrances of life.

*The Little White Bird*, although Peter Pan is not mentioned until page 67, makes several references to the passing of time, highlighting time on several occasions, with the word 'time' itself being used five times on the first page. The narrator, Captain W, even mentions the young boy David's fascination at his mother reaching the age of twenty-six: '"she is twenty-six," which is so great an age to David, that I think he fears she cannot last much longer' (Barrie 2019, p. 1). Instinctively, the reader is led to believe the information with which they are provided; however, upon deeper analysis, one begins to wonder whether David really thinks his mother is a great age, or if the narrator is using it to set the tone of cynicism towards the mother that evidently follows as he says himself 'tell her I said she looks more' (Barrie 2019, p. 1). Given Barrie's pattern of pessimism towards adulthood, the latter is more likely the case, as he continues to say, 'and her arms are kindly wings that wish I was a little boy like David' (Barrie 2019, p. 1), showing not only his jealousy towards David, but also his admiration of David's mother, an emotion that contradicts his initial insults towards her. Furthermore, Captain W's juxtaposed feelings can also be attributed to his envy of her youth 'I had a delicious dream that night. I dreamt that I too was twenty-six, which was a long time ago' (Barrie 2019, p. 1).

As highlighted in Barrie's other novels and his memoir, he tends to pinpoint occasions to an exact moment of time by stating the time on the clock when something occurs. Barrie continues with this trend, although it appears to be due to his own personal connection to time and not down to some more generic obsession with clocks. This can be seen in *The Little White Bird*, when on page 3, he is asked by David's mother, Mary A, what the time is, and he refuses

to simply give the answer, 'she asked would I tell her the time please, just as children ask, and forget as they run back with it to their nurse … raising my hat I pointed with my staff to a clock in the distance' (Barrie 2019, pp. 2-3). This shows that Captain W felt the need to show the woman the significance of time, alluding to the ignorance of children, who are unaware of the finality of each second that passes. Additionally, after previously acknowledging Mary A's enviable youth, perhaps the gesture towards the clock was a subtle reminder that whilst she is lively and youthful at that moment, the clock of life does not stop ticking for anyone, and one day, she too will take Captain W's place, wishing she had taken the gesture as a warning sign to embrace every moment while she is fit and capable.

Consequently, as the novel progressed, Captain W's awareness of time manifested itself repeatedly, the following being just a sample of examples from this particular novel:

> 'It became part of my life at two o'clock with the coffee, the cigarette, and the liqueur. Now comes the tragedy' (Barrie 2019, p. 8); 'the time was nine o'clock of a November evening' (Barrie 2019, p. 14); 'there was a clock hard by that struck the quarters, and one o'clock passed and two. What time is it now? Twenty past two. And now? It is still twenty past two' (Barrie 2019, p. 22); 'and it was strange to me to reflect at, say, three o'clock that if I had been brazen at half-past two all would now be over'. (Barrie 2019, p. 35)

Evidently, time began to represent more than life passing by; it also meant missed opportunities, sometimes in the space of a half an hour, and sometimes in the space of a minute. However, the pattern of references to a specific time on the clock seems to change as the novel progresses. The word 'clock' is mentioned at least once on each of the following pages: 3, 8, 14, 22, 23, 27, 35, 38, 43, 52, 58, 64, 92. Previously, I mentioned that Peter Pan was first introduced on the 67$^{th}$ page, meaning a specific time of the clock was only mentioned once more in the remaining 82 pages, suggesting that Barrie's focus on the lost moments took a back seat when the immortal Peter Pan began to peer through the turn of each page. Thus, with the change in Barrie's style

of writing comes a change in his perspective. To achieve immortality means one's personal value of time is diminished, and what better stage of life to be in when this happens than in the middle of childhood, where worries never last long enough to establish a foundation. Without foundation, they are destined to be short-lived, meaning Barrie's burden free Peter Pan becomes the manifestation of a man in pursuit of accessing and embodying the resilience found in the mind of a child.

Whilst the very essence of the *Peter Pan* novel is the epitome of childhood innocence and adventures between the front and back cover, the underlying panic surrounding the transcendence of time and the inevitability of death in a scene involving Captain Hook and the crocodile is thought provoking:

> 'Peter flung my arm,' he said, wincing, 'to a crocodile that happened to be passing by.'
> 'I have often,' said Smee, 'noticed your strange dread of crocodiles.'
> 'Not of crocodiles,' Hook corrected him, 'but of that one crocodile.' He lowered his voice. 'It liked my arm so much, Smee, that it has followed me ever since, from sea to sea and from land to land, licking its lips for the rest of me.'
> 'In a way,' said Smee, 'it's sort of a compliment.'
> 'I want no such compliments,' Hook barked petulantly. 'I want Peter Pan, who first gave the brute its taste for me.'
> He sat down on a large mushroom, and now there was a quiver in his voice. 'Smee,' he said huskily, 'that crocodile would have had me before this, but by a lucky chance it swallowed a clock which goes tick inside it, and so before it can reach me I hear the tick and bolt.' He laughed, but in a hollow way.
> 'Some day,' said Smee, 'the clock will run down, and then he'll get you.' Hook wetted his dry lips. 'Ay,' he said, 'that's the fear that haunts me.' (Barrie 2012, p. 75)

Hook, the antagonist of the novel, although part of the imaginary land that is The Neverland, is an adult. While Barrie fails to tell the reader whether he is growing old, his age, or how the passing of time affects him, it is still obvious he has aged at one point in time. This passage, however, alludes to the realisation that time is also chasing him, and whilst the wonders of a

fantastical world surround Hook, reality abruptly brings a halt to the experience: 'the text underscores the horrors of the real world. Moreover, in this world as the novel indicates, time is reduced to time "by the crocodile" and, in this way, traditional absolutes are replaced by relative or subjective entities' (Hudson 2006, p. 321). Hook's assertion that the clock being inside the crocodile is the reason he is still alive alludes to the human senses, the sense of hearing, showing whilst one can hear the clock ticking, they are still alive and it is not until the clock stops that the end is approaching. The crocodile acts as a metaphor for the journey towards death, swallowing the clock so the ticking becomes more shallow and harder to hear, yet faint enough to act as a reminder of each passing tick as a moment in time gone by. The internal reference to the ticking of a clock also resonates with the Kantian theory of time and space, as he 'argues that space and time are pure forms of all intuition contributed by our own faculty of sensibility, and therefore forms of which we can have a priori knowledge' (Guyer 2010, p. 22). Kant claimed that experience was a contributing factor to one's understanding of time, yet the concept was not solely based on it alone. There is an internal sense of being that connects any living thing to the concept of time, and the crocodile becomes an example of this theory with his internal clock that can be heard externally. Hook, although part of this imaginary world, is reminded of this inner sense of time as the crocodile passes by.

From the opening pages of his memoir, *Margaret Ogilvy*, the contemplations on the end of life overpowered the phenomena of living, as Barrie used capitalisation to highlight the impact death had on him from a young age, 'I have been told the face of my mother was awful in its calmness as she set off to get between Death and her boy' (Barrie 2014, p. 3). This theme rang true through other works, with some novels such as *Better Dead*, attempting to use tools such as satire as a coping mechanism, as the protagonists come face to face with the finality of the situation. Consequently, by the end of such novels, the characters, as adults, must face the reality of death, meaning that Barrie needed a stronger instrument than satire to combat the

immeasurable anxiety to which he was always in danger of succumbing. It appears Barrie found this instrument in *The Little White Bird* and *Peter Pan*, combining fantastical elements with a never-ending childhood to simultaneously create a world where death was insignificant and unreachable. Thus, as Freud claimed at the end of *Reflections on War and Death*, 'if you wish life, prepare for death' (Freud 2015, p. 28), although questionably successful, the theme of these selected pieces of Barrie's work can be abridged to a distinctive and substantial effort to prepare for death.

# Chapter 8 'Betwixt-and-Between': Fantasy and Reality in a Life of Adventure and Accountability

'"After all," she said, "you are only a Betwixt-and-Between." But it hurt him so much that she immediately added, "It must be a delicious thing to be"', wrote Barrie in *The Little White Bird* (Barrie 2019, p. 103). With children making an appearance in most of Barrie's novels, an element of fantasy is to be expected within the parameters of the interactions with the imagination of each child. Their imaginations exhibit various levels of flourishing, which mostly correlate to their age. By 1887, Barrie's work became saturated in realism, engulfing the trials and tribulations of everyday life and adult responsibilities. The introduction of even the slightest presence of innocence amongst the density of reality became a solace for not only the reader, but also for Barrie himself. *Margaret Ogilvy* stood as a materialised product of Barrie's recollections of growing up, focusing on his observations of his mother. Although it was a piece whose whole purpose was to show the reality of life in his household, he mentions early in the novel, how he remembers the moment his childhood came to an end, 'but I speak from hearsay no longer; I knew my mother for ever now' (Barrie 2014, p. 3). The games and excitement of the imagination seldom return as grief subjugates the memoir. In other texts such as *Better Dead, Sentimental Tommy,* and *Tommy and Grizel*, Barrie continues this pattern with the adult characters finding themselves growing further and further from the comfort of their imagination as they grow older. However, a shift occurs in his genre of writing, which this chapter will explore, as it goes from realism with a hint of fantasy, to fantasy with a hint of realism, with the creation of the character Peter Pan.

Lloyd Alexander described fantasy as 'hardly an escape from reality, it's a way of

understanding it' (L2runlimited 2008, 00:05.42) which epitomises the core argument of this chapter, as fantasy provides a framework for understanding Barrie's reality. Barrie began incorporating fantastical elements into his work as an instrument of coming to terms with the consequences of human existence, with death signifying the final stage of life's process, something with which he struggled with immensely. Psychoanalysis suggests that elements of fantasy in literature can be attributed to underlying desires and repressed feelings, as they represent the workings of the author's subconscious mind. Referring to Barrie's *Peter Pan*, Smith highlights the direct juxtaposition of fantasy and reality in one scene in the novel:

> The children's nurse is a Newfoundland dog called Nana and Mr. Darling lives in the doghouse … from the story's start to finish, is consistently from a phantasy-laden, child's eye view, whether of everyday life or the internal world of another level of consciousness. (Smith 2012, p. 517)

Barrie moves into the fantasy genre with *Peter Pan*; however, the adventures of the main characters are never too far from true-to-life experiences. For example, as Peter returns for Jane, while they fly away, Wendy is described as visibly ageing, 'in the end Wendy let them fly away together. Our last glimpse of her shows her watching them receding into the sky until they were as small as stars. As you look at Wendy, you may see her hair becoming white' (Barrie 2012, p. 231). To look at the progression and utilisation of fantasy in Barrie's writing, it is imperative to look at his earliest works, investigating the reasons why he executed such a drastic change in direction regarding the genre of books he created.

As literary realism, the introduction of subject matter based on truth with relatable themes and focus on the representation of the individual in literature, began to spread through the world in the mid-1800s, authors began to favour familiarity over aspects of exaggeration and speculation in their work. Ian Dungan asks the question 'what if we consider the human rather than the social as the totality invoked by Victorian realism?' (Dungan 2018, p. 837), in

relation to this change in perspective that started to take over literature for years to come, summarising the focal point of the movement:

> Realism's goal is recognition: not just of a world composed of contingent, particular phenomena but of the immanence of the ideal in the real – 'truth and beauty' in 'definite, substantial reality,' 'beauty in … commonplace things.' Victorian realism is a representational technology of mediation: between the actual and ideal, particular and general, individual and species. This distinguishes it from the 'formal realism,' posited on a primacy of individual experience, which drives the eighteenth-century 'rise of the novel'… nineteenth-century fiction socializes reality, the Bildungsroman and free indirect discourse. (Dungan 2018, p. 836)

Here, Dungan draws attention to the middle ground between reality and desire that was brought to the forefront of literature in the 1800s. The individual, who was once lost in the midst of dramatic elements in novels and plays, now stands alone under the spotlight, with their soul becoming more visible to the audience. Dungan reiterates the significance of this shift in focus, claiming the way to really capture reality is to reduce the subject matter to the individual. This emphasis on the individual experience to which Dungan refers here, is evident in Barrie's work, from his nonfictional memoir *Margaret Ogilvy* to his Bildungsroman in *Sentimental Tommy.* One interesting element of realism highlighted by Dungan, that can be seen in Barrie' novels, is how his characters interact with realistic situations and problems. However, the ideals of truth and beauty that Dungan describes are far more prominent within a fantastical setting than they are in realistic scenarios, suggesting Barrie found it difficult to establish this ideal in his novels.

*Margaret Ogilvy* as a memoir, stands as Barrie's most recognisable representation of reality through written form, as he puts pen to paper recalling memories and stories based on the life of his mother, and the impact of trauma on both her life and the people around her. Whilst it is nonfictional and therefore a different genre to his novels, the tone of the book is a

significant indication of the way Barrie would go on to represent reality in his later work. For Barrie, his reality is filled with the impending doom of tragedy, grief and death, as even mentions of happiness are accompanied by sorrow, 'I am reluctant to leave those happy days, but the end must be faced, and as I write I seem to see my mother growing smaller and her face more wistful … God had said 'child of mine, your time has come'" (Barrie 2014, p. 69). By acknowledging the reasons behind the immensity of weight that life carries in this memoir, the reasons behind Barrie's methods of combining fantasy and realism in his fictional novels, whilst he has the opportunity and scope to do so, become easier to comprehend.

This approach stimulated by realism continued, as Barrie wrote the novel *Better Dead*, which was inspired by his lack of enthusiasm surrounding the process of life, and the impact the involvement of society has on an individual. It follows Andrew through the stages of life that come with becoming an adult, such as relationships, creating a family and establishing a social life. However, the most prominent theme revolves around the stress of job-hunting, trying to find the balance between fulfilling one's own ambitions and listening to society's expectations and standards. For Andrew, the prospect of becoming a writer was a path he was sure he wanted to follow; however, the assumption that he should conform to a more conventional role, with secure income and a respected status, was one that weighed heavily on his shoulders, 'yet he was only born to follow, and his chance of making a noise in the world rested on his meeting a stronger than himself' (Barrie 2018, p. 4). This mimicked Barrie's personal life, with his father and other professionals questioning his choice of career. He recalls in his memoir how his mother's opinions were not dissimilar to everyone else's, as he claims in relation to his enthusiasm to write that 'for long she took mine as something I would grow out of, and afterwards they hurt her so that I tried to give them up. To be a minister— that she thought was among the fairest prospects' (Barrie 2014, p. 17).

As the pressure builds for Andrew, the novel begins to change from a realistic depiction

of everyday life, to an exaggerated, satirical account of how an individual deals with the most difficult part of life as an adult. The beginning of this shift in perspective can be seen during the dialogue I previously mentioned, which occurs between Andrew and the stranger, as Andrew is introduced to the Society of Doing Without Some People:

> 'And the Society you speak of, what is it?' 'The S.D.W.S.P.'
> 'The S.D.W.S.P.?'
> 'Yes, the Society for Doing Without Some People.'
> They were in Holborn, but turned up Southampton Row for quiet.
> 'You have told me,' said the stranger, now speaking rapidly, 'that at times you have felt tempted to take your life, that life for which you will one day have to account. Suicide is the coward's refuge. You are miserable? When a young man knows that, he is happy. Misery is but preparing for an old age of delightful reminiscence. You say that London has no work for you, that the functions to which you looked forward are everywhere discharged by another. That need not drive you to despair. If it proves that someone should die, does it necessarily follow that the someone is you?'
> 'But is not the other's life as sacred as mine?' 'That is his concern.' (Barrie 2018, pp. 20-21)

Prior to this conversation, Andrew came to the realisation that his job prospects were dependent on other people, as he discovered that he must rely on them to leave their jobs so there is a position available for him to uptake. Thus, the conversation between Andrew and the stranger came at a time where his confidence was low, and his moral perspectives were perhaps not as resistant as they would normally have been. The stranger played on his weaknesses, suggesting an extreme solution to a common problem. The surprising component of this conversation is when Andrew begins to consider the stranger's proposition, as the original evident element of realism begins to leave the novel, as he says in relation to the possibility of murder as a solution, 'this is a trivial matter, and hardly worth going into at any length' (Barrie 2018, p. 21). Morals and righteousness take a back seat, as the characters attempt to justify their extreme thoughts.

In this novel, Barrie shows how he drastically abandons realism when reality becomes too much to bear. Furthermore, as previously alluded to, Barrie plays on the Darwinian notion of the survival of the fittest, which indicated the high success rate and lifespan of a species that learned how to adapt to their surroundings (Darwin 2008, p. 55). Barrie can be seen to utilise this theory, using Andrew and the S.D.W.S.P. as a satirical representation of the idea of adjusting oneself in order to succeed. Here, Andrew and his fellow group members acknowledge that the way to survival is to murder the competition, creating an extreme play on Darwin's concept as an attempt to highlight the complicated nature of the situation. Andrew, in the end, comes to realise that death is inevitable, and the survival of the fittest is only relevant when one is in the position to retain that title, something with which ageing will always interfere.

Freud also discussed the use of phantasy, claiming it is a representation of underlying wishes and desires. In his work on unconscious phantasy, Heinz Weiss discusses Freud's dissection of the role of phantasy in the human psyche, separating it into two main components, 'on the one hand, he conceptualized phantasies as a psychic retreat, as a reservoir for wish fulfilling thoughts in which they are allowed to thrive protected from the demands of reality' (Weiss 2017, p. 799). Whilst it is quite the assumption to conclude that Andrew's murderous thoughts in *Better Dead* represent hidden desires for Barrie, the concept behind the idea can be seen as a satirical play on his hopes for his job-search to be a much more pleasant and straight-forward experience. The older people who become his victims in *Better Dead*, act as the barrier between Andrew's career choice, and his dream job writing for the press (Barrie 2018, p. 2). It is, however, safe to associate this with a form of a psychic retreat, as Freud suggests, allowing him to achieve a moment of release from the demands of society's expectations, whilst also sarcastically addressing the lightening of moral obligations associated with decision-making. Weiss continues by highlighting the second half of phantasy in mental life, claiming Freud

'placed less emphasis on the creative, communicative and reality exploring potential of phantasy. As mental activity phantasies remain split off from the rest of thinking and can only find their way back to reality via the detour of artistic production' (Weiss 2017, p. 800). Further on in the article, Weiss connects phantasy to reality by insisting they are never far away from each other during conscious thinking and possess a complex relationship with each other (Weiss 2017, p. 800). Out of all of Barrie's novels, *Better Dead* is undoubtedly deeply located on the blurred line between reality and fantasy, as the shift in perspective is much subtler than that of other novels such as *The Little White Bird* or *Peter Pan*, which is aided by the artistic reproduction to which Weiss refers.

With *Better Dead*'s use of satire contributing to the gradual shift in genre within the novel, *Sentimental Tommy* has one significant instrument that *Better Dead* lacks specifically, a child protagonist. Childhood, in Barrie's novels, proves to be the strongest pathway to escaping reality; thus, as a novel introduces a young boy as the main character, reality is destined to be combatted with make-believe for as long as that boy remains young. Tommy's introduction is one of striking realism, with poverty, pride and ignorance all intertwining to give the reader a strong first impression of the boy, 'in sexless garments, which were all he had … lest he sit down hurriedly to hide them' (Barrie 2007, p. 1). As the reader a picture can be formed of the desolate scene of helplessness, with the tempting smell of 'fried fish' (Barrie 2007) now holding more significance when passing the nostrils of a malnourished boy driven by his mother's self-destructive pride. However, after a heavy introduction highlighting their misfortune, the narrator alludes to the phenomena of imagination, 'but only the smaller had imagination, and as he used it recklessly, their positions soon changed' (Barrie 2007, p. 1), explaining how the children that occupy the stairway along with Tommy may have grown too much and consequently, have lost the use of their imagination. Tommy, however, as the 'smaller' of the bunch, had access to his imagination and was still able to use it to his

advantage. Perhaps this scene even signals a nod to Barrie's own height complex, which it has been previously argued, played a role in Barrie's creation of *Peter Pan*.

Throughout the novel, his access to his imagination proves immeasurably beneficial to Tommy, given his misfortunate circumstances:

> It was the custom of the toffs to sit beside you and question you about your crimes, and lacking the imagination that made Tommy such an ornament to the house the chances were that he would flounder in his answers and be ejected. (Barrie 2007, p. 48)

Barrie repeatedly juxtaposes Tommy's advantage against those who can no longer access their imagination, which shows that Barrie is eager to establish a fine line that separates children and adults, even in novels written years before *Peter Pan* had been published. Tommy's imagination quickly becomes his ticket to survival, mirroring Barrie's attitude displayed in his memoir *Margaret Ogilvy*, where the reality of a serious situation becomes much harder to accept when fantasy cannot be accessed to act as a cushion for the fall. Although he had dealt some of the hardest cards in life at such a young age, Tommy uses his imagination to make these scenarios a more bearable experience, 'his imagination painted the picture with one sweep of its brush' (Barrie 2007, p. 88).

The only mention of the word 'reality' appears at the end of a paragraph on page 62 of the novel, and the words that appear alongside it are indicative of its presence in the piece. Firstly, the mention of a 'mother' alludes to the devastating impact the demise of Barrie's mother had on him as a child growing up. Interestingly, there is also a reference to a 'bed', which became the place Barrie's mother Margaret spent all her days after the death of her son. The narrator then mentions the words 'cried', 'cry' 'whimper' and 'tearful', further adding to the memories of grief and upset inflicted upon his family for years. However, young Tommy meets this with resistance, as the narrator explains 'by supreme effort he shouldered reality to the door' (Barrie 2007, p. 62). As previously mentioned, Tommy was the only child present

whose imagination was still intact, thus, here he uses force to challenge the reality that encourages his tears to be filled with sadness.

With the same brute force that he used to combat reality, the narrator attempts to address this resistance by making references to dreamlike creatures such as fairies and magicians. At one point in the novel, Tommy's storytelling combines the features of Thrums with the contents of his imagination, allowing for an image of combined fantasy and realism to be painted in one picture:

> Of the tales told by Tommy that day in words Scotch and cockney, of Thrums, home of heroes and the arts, where the lamps are lit by a magician called Leerie-leerie-licht- the-lamps (but he is also friendly, and you can fling stones at him), and the merest children are allowed to set the spinning-wheels a-whirling, and dagont is the swear, and the stairs are so fine that the houses wear them outside for show … (Barrie 2007, p. 8)

Here, the narrator describes Tommy's tales, how they begin with a town familiar to the other people in the novel, and progress to make-believe as a magician is given a name that prompts one's imagination to picture him in a state of illumination. The magician is described in a pleasant manner, yet the reader is told they can injure him with rocks, an image that stands as a metaphor for the adult mind that automatically attenuates characters like him by means of rationalisation. For a child, imagining magic is an unchallenged second nature, yet when they grow up, the belief disappears as the mind uses logic to evaluate situations. He continues:

> … and you drop a pail at the end of a rope down a hole, and sometimes it comes up full of water, and sometimes full of fairies of these and other wonders, if you would know, ask not a dull historian, nor even go to Thrums, but to those rather who have been boys and girls there and now are exiles. Such a one Tommy knows, an unhappy woman, foolish, not very lovable, flung like a stone out of the red quarry upon a land where it cannot grip, and tearing her heart for a sight of the home she shall see no more. From her Tommy had his pictures, and he colored them rarely. (Barrie 2007, p. 8)

Furthermore, the narrator alludes to this transition from having a vivid imagination, to reality creeping through the cracks of the infantile mind, by using a metaphor of dipping a bucket in water and never being quite sure whether it will be overflowing with fantasy or filled with basic transparent liquid. The people described as exiles, were once children in Thrums, are now grown, unhappy, dull and lacking vibrancy in their lives.

True to the nature of a Bildungsroman, the novel follows Tommy through his childhood, meaning that he grows and develops as the tale progresses. Kavey explains how Barrie attempted to deal with how 'the fantasy of childhood he had conjured mixed uneasily with reality' (Kavey & Friedman 2009, p. 60). This struggle between two realms can be seen as the pages proceed towards the end of the novel, also signifying a change in the development of Tommy. As Tommy and Elspeth walk the street in London, a realisation occurs to him, one that is deficient in hope, 'but Tommy recognized it not; he did not even feel that he was near it, for there were no outside stairs, no fairies strolling about, it was a short street as shabby as his own' (Barrie 2007, p. 35). For Tommy, the bucket of uncertainty is no longer accessible, as he now accepts it will always be full of water. He is not only aware of the disconnection between himself and the street on which he walks, he now feels completely alienated from it, saddened by its overwhelming aura of realism. From that moment onwards, fairies ceased to exist in *Sentimental Tommy*, and any mention of magic was negatively counteracted.

Tommy as an adult in *Tommy and Grizel* ensures the magical elements seen in *Sentimental Tommy* are absent throughout the entire novel as the innocence disappears too. There is a brief mention of a fairy, yet it exists only on stage, 'like the fairy in the pantomime' (Barrie 2009, p. 158). Birkin describes Barrie's treatment of fantasy and reality as 'twin sides to the coin' (Birkin 2003, p. 17); however, it appears that the probability, when flipping this coin, of landing on one side or the other varies in relation to each novel. *Sentimental Tommy*, although possessing fantasy features, has an overall realistic theme, whilst *Tommy and*

*Grizel*, is deprived of the same fantastical tone. The commonality between the loss of fantasy and the two novels, is of course, the growth of Tommy from a child to an adult. Whilst as a child, reality intrudes on Tommy's daydreaming, in *Tommy and Grizel*, the opposite is true, 'it was his dream intruding on reality, as a wheel may revolve for a moment longer after the spring breaks' (Barrie 2009, p. 81). Like Barrie himself, and Andrew in *Better Dead*, writing is the route to accessing a world where hardships and problems can be controlled. Yet true to real life, there is always someone to remind him that words can only take you so far into the realm of make-believe, 'if writing makes you live in such an unreal world, it must do you harm. I see now what Mr. Cathro meant, long ago, when he called you Senti' (Barrie 2009, p. 73).

One thing Tommy grew to learn in *Tommy and Grizel*, was how unchangeable and unimpressionable he was as he became an adult. As touched upon in previous chapters, Tommy had the prospect of love at his feet, with Grizel repeatedly showing signs of adoration and dedication to him. However, unrequited love was all it could be, with the narrator explaining Tommy's want to love, without ever achieving it fully. Thus, the daunting prospect of the real world constantly intruding on the world of make-believe became a recurring theme in this novel. Dungan explains how the use of realism in the Victorian era orbits itself around the individual, up taking their position in society, progressing from a person whose sole concern is their own well-being, to someone who must now consider the people and factors that surround them on a daily basis, 'the literary equivalent of vanishing-point perspective, a repertoire of techniques to secure the human at the centre of reality' (Dungan 2018, p. 837). Tommy as a child, did not have to worry about such things, yet as an adult, was forced to acknowledge how his inability to love impacted on Grizel. During the conversation that proceeded Grizel's comment on the impact writing in an unreal world has on Tommy, Tommy makes half attempts to conceal his truth to soften the blow for Grizel:

'On the contrary,' said Tommy, 'my heart bled for her. Did you not notice that I was

> crying?' But he could not make Grizel smile; so, to please her, he said, with a smile that was not very sincere: 'I wish I were different, but that is how ideas come to me at least, all those that are of any value.'
>
> 'Surely you could fight against them and drive them away?'
>
> This to Tommy, who held out sugar to them to lure them to him! But still he treated her with consideration.
>
> 'That would mean my giving up writing altogether, Grizel,' he said kindly. 'Then why not give it up?'
>
> Really! But she admired him, and still he bore with her.
>
> 'I don't like the book,' she said, 'if it is written at such a cost.' 'People say the book has done them good, Grizel.'
>
> 'What does that matter, if it does you harm?' In her eagerness to persuade him, her words came pell-mell. 'If writing makes you live in such an unreal world, it must do you harm.' (Barrie 2009, p. 72)

Here, in a novel soaked in realism from page 1 to page 312, unlike *The Little White Bird* and *Peter Pan*, the process of Barrie's catharsis can be seen through a more relatable lens. By using a character based on reality, Barrie created an individual that acknowledged his position in society, whilst accepting life's challenges. Thus, he created his own form of protection, one which he felt moved him out of harm's way, whilst Grizel thought the opposite. This became a common theme in Barrie's life, especially with the creation of Peter Pan's character drawing such interest and interrogation from critics all over the world.

In previous chapters, the formation of the human personality proposed by Freud was discussed, exhibiting how the tripartite model of the id, ego and superego, works congruently considering the individual's wants, needs, desires and the context of each in relation to their surroundings. The formation of each element of the tripartite theory ensures that an individual can progress from a selfish state in youth to becoming an adult who can maintain a life as a person who must accept and reflect on how their choices affect others. As the id finds itself associated with urges driven by the need for satisfaction, Freud decided to give the source of

these impulses a name, referring to it as the pleasure principle. As no person could thrive in society solely based on the urges of the pleasure principle, Freud claimed the ego used its own principle to counteract this, one that ensured all desires were dealt with in a socially appropriate and acceptable manner. This, he named the reality principle:

> Under the influence of the ego's instincts of self-preservation, the pleasure principle is replaced by the reality principle. This latter principle does not abandon the intention of ultimately obtaining pleasure, but it nevertheless demands and carries into effect the postponement of satisfaction, the abandonment of a number of possibilities of gaining satisfaction and the temporary toleration of unpleasure as a step on the long indirect road to pleasure. The pleasure principle long persists, however, as the method of working employed by the sexual instincts, which are so hard to 'educate', and, starting from those instincts, or in the ego itself, it often succeeds in overcoming the reality principle, to the detriment of the organism as a whole. (Freud 1961, p. 34)

As Freud explains in the above extract from *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, the reality principle is a crucial element of daily life, ensuring the individual has the opportunity to critically analyse their choices, determining the possible outcomes and their impact on both themselves and the people around them. Whilst Freud acknowledges that the pleasure principle is often successful in overpowering the reality principle, without it, humanity could not function as a species without a monumental and detrimental impact on society. Thus, without the reality principle, life would be reduced in essence to that of a child's 'early efflorescence of infantile sexual life is doomed to extinction because its wishes are incompatible with reality and with the inadequate stage of development which the child has reached' (Freud 1961, p. 44). As a child, the pleasure principle is at its most prominent, whilst the ego is at its first stage of establishment. The urges for wants, needs and desires are much stronger and need to be satisfied. As they mature, the reality principle's development ensures the balance between the id and ego evens out.

The differences in various stages of a developing personality are apparent in the two novels *Sentimental Tommy* and *Tommy and Grizel*. *Sentimental Tommy* exhibits a child, focused solely on his own gratification. He struggles to separate real life from make-believe, meaning that his ability to evaluate situations before decision making is absent. Freud speaks about this occurrence in adulthood, where a revisit to childhood memories forces the individual to struggle with the dissection of the two, yet Freud asserts that it is now due to neglect rather than being unavoidable, 'after reflecting a bit we can easily understand what is so confusing in this matter. It is the slight regard for reality, the neglect to keep fact distinct from phantasy' (Freud 2015, p. 228). He highlights his and other psychoanalyst's frustration when confronted with situations where it appears that the patient is merely telling tales of events that never happened. However, he soon admits that this observation is purely at surface level, as through analysis of the patient's psyche, investigating from where these supposed tales stemmed, he discovers there is far more to it than exaggerated claims. Freud explains this process of enlightenment in the following excerpt taken from *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*:

> We are apt to feel insulted that the patient has wasted our time with invented tales. There is an enormous gap in our thinking between reality and invention and we accord an entirely different valuation to reality. The patient, too, takes this same viewpoint in his normal thinking. When he offers the material which, by way of the symptom, leads back to the wish situations which are modelled upon the childhood experiences, we are at first, to be sure, in doubt whether we are dealing with reality or with phantasy. Later certain traits determine this decision; we are confronted with the task of acquainting the patient with them. This can never be accomplished without difficulty. If at the outset we tell him that he is going to reveal phantasies with which he has veiled his childhood history, just as every people weaves myths around its antiquity, we notice (to our comfort) that his interest in the further pursuit of the subject suddenly diminishes. (Freud 2015, p. 228)

Freud begins by explaining the necessary steps that need to be executed before the patient can

truly unfold, tapping into their repressed childhood memories and thus, leaving themselves open and vulnerable to the process. Without this, Freud acknowledges the presence of the barriers that are assembled subconsciously by the patient as a mode of self-defence. Establishing this firstly, he then moves onto the method of understanding the information at hand. He continues:

> He, too, wants to discover realities, and despises all 'notions.' But if until this is accomplished we allow him to believe that we are investigating the actual occurrences of his childhood, we run the risk of later being charged with error and with our apparent gullibility. For a long time he is unable to reconcile himself to the idea of considering phantasy and reality on equal terms and he tends, with reference to the childish experiences to be explained, to neglect for the time being the difference between the real and the imaginary. And yet this is obviously the only correct attitude toward these psychological products because they are, in a sense, real. It is a fact that the patient is able to create such phantasies for himself, and this is of scarcely less importance for his neurosis than if he had really undergone the experience which he imagines. These phantasies possess psychological reality in contrast to physical reality, and so we gradually come to understand that in the realm of neuroses the psychological reality is the determining factor. (Freud 1992, p. 228)

Freud argues that through psychoanalysis, he can determine the reason behind the intensity and vibrancy of the tales. They sound like stories to him, and although it is apparent they are not physically real for the patient, they are metaphorically real, feeling entirely like reality to them psychologically. Here, the connection between fantasy and reality is once again established by Freud. Whilst fantasy can be utilised as a defence mechanism, the stories referred to in the above quote become so closely connected to the patient's reality, that they cause a difficulty in separating fact from fiction when fantasy can be so therapeutic. When writing about what happens to repressed feelings, Freud claims 'repressed wishes still exist—though there is a simultaneous inhibition which holds them down' (Freud 2010, p. 255), which coincides with

this patient's inability to differentiate 'the real and the imaginary' (Freud 1992, p. 228). Consequently, when repressed feelings are held down for a long period of time, as they are retrieved, the patient begins to embellish the uneasy memories and feelings to create a more pleasant experience, thus becoming a mechanism of self-defence.

The same happens for Tommy, as his progress from boy to man shows a development in his personality, where wants and needs begin to balance out. With wants predominately occupying *Sentimental Tommy,* needs become more frequent in *Tommy and Grizel*, showing how his maturity aids his understanding of life as an adult, as the powerful urges of the id are counteracted by the ego and superego, so that Tommy can incorporate himself in union with others in a sociably acceptable way. Thus, realism is called into action. However, Tommy's account as an adult is not without elements of fantasy. The word 'story' is mentioned 54 times, surprisingly, 13 times more than it appeared in the Bildungsroman. This primarily mirrors the stages of life, as young Tommy had the ability to tap into his imagination and fully submerge himself in his adventures, forgetting the fictional element. Older Tommy, conversely, needed the story, the physical five letter word, to access the place of fantasy he had such an ease of admission to years ago, 'I saw he believed his story' (Barrie 2009, p. 97). Freud's assertion that during adulthood fantasy is utilised as a coping mechanism for repressed feelings, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, can be seen here as old Tommy uses fantasy to deal with uneasy feelings. Fantasy for him, becomes an instrument in his everyday life, protecting him from unresolved trauma.

There is a moment on page 190 during the chapter entitled 'Grizel's Glorious Hour,' where the narrator begins to tell a story that Tommy recites regularly, opening with, 'for this is the story Tommy read into the ring: There was once a sorrowful man of twenty-three, and forty, and sixty. Ah, how grey the beard has grown as we speak! How thin the locks!' (Barrie 2009, p. 190). From the beginning, the story is deeply rooted in an exaggerated and accelerated

form of reality, addressing the passing of time and its effects on physical appearances. He continues, saying 'but still we know him for the same by that garnet ring … yet it is her engagement ring. Never can he give it to her, but must always carry it about with him as the piteous memory of what had never been' (Barrie 2009, p. 190). Although this reference is made to the passing of time, his story juxtaposes the physical changes of his looks with those that his reputation had endured over time. The man is labelled with 'an innocence that never wore off, not even when he had reached his threescore years' (Barrie 2009, p. 190), with eternal innocence once again making an appearance, a theme which resonated throughout his fictional novels.

Whilst Tommy struggled with his finite state, using the aforementioned tales to access his childhood, Barrie evidently used his energy to create fiction that utilised fantasy alongside reality as an attempt to address the unnerving realisation that accompanied adulthood. Tommy's struggles serve as evidence that pretence was not enough to make much of an impact on life overall. Just as reality is destined to be combatted with make-believe whilst the boy remains young, it was time to look at the common denominator between loss of imagination and responsibilities – growing old. Now, Barrie's focus was redirected towards the possibility of achieving eternal innocence through fiction, exploring its repercussions on both the individual and those around him/her. Thus, a step-by-step progression can be seen to begin with his novel *The Little White Bird*, as fantasy starts to play a larger part in the tale, whilst the human imagination of J. M. Barrie goes on to completely illuminate the *Peter Pan* tale in oneiric magic. Freud, referring to the repressed wishes of one of his patients concluded, 'there lay a whole quantity of childhood memories, combined, as best they might be, into a single phantasy' (Freud 2010, p 223), which coincides with Barrie's search for eternal innocence, using fantasy to gain a less traumatic route towards his repressed childhood memories. Thus, the context of Barrie's novels as they progress from realistic to fictional resonate with Freud's

theory on the use of fantasy as a defence mechanism.

As previously mentioned in Chapter 3, *The Little White Bird* begins with a raw and telling piece of dialogue from the narrator, in the chapter entitled 'David and I Set Forth Upon a Journey,' explaining his current relationship with both the boy named David and also with David's mother. The relationship with David is filled with admiration and love, while that with David's mother is full of spite and jealousy. Time is addressed, depicting feelings of apprehension towards its unstoppable nature, 'I dreamt that I too was twenty-six, which was a long time ago' (Barrie 1901, p. 5). The introductory paragraphs are where the first impressions are formed of the novel, and in this case, Captain W gives little reason to think that the novel will lead to anything other than a fictional representation of real life situations and circumstances. The reference to dreams on the first page allows a window of curiosity to form, as the 'delicious dream' takes Captain W to a place he does not recognise whilst he is awake (Barrie 1901, p. 5). As the novel progresses, this continues, with occasions such as the birth of a baby prompting the narrator to exclaim 'David was quite carried away by the reality of it' (Barrie 1901, p. 183). There are, however, hints throughout that suggest the novel will make a shift in genre, as Captain W describes scenic locations, whilst simultaneously using the word 'real' to describe common household appliances, 'from this walk a passage called Bunting's Thumb, because it is that length, leads into Picnic Street, where there are real kettles, and chestnut-blossom falls into your mug as you are drinking' (Barrie 1901, p. 85). The use of the adjective 'real' alongside 'kettles' subtly questions the other objects being described, and ponders whether they are all part of an imaginary scenario.

Viviane Abel Prot, in her article entitled 'Several Aspects of the Concept of Phantasy', addressed the use of phantasy in literature, whilst emphasising the importance of Freud's contribution to the area. She examines the development of phantasy, claiming that an in-depth analysis of Freudian theory begs questions to be answered around the definition of the word,

and wondering whether fantasy should be viewed as 'an unconscious production; as an individual and/or archetypal psychic organisation; or as "fantasying" in the sense of daydreaming; or as a withdrawal that protects a fragile self and can even lead to delusional thought' (Prot 2017, p. 780). Prot addresses these questions in relation to Freud's 1919 paper *A Child is Being Beaten*, where he probes the perplexing occurrence of pleasure during an uncomfortable and often damaging scenario. Through his studies, Freud concluded that there is more to be taken from an experience of suffering, where arousal meets pain in an unlikely collaboration. In the case of literature, Prot claims that 'image, representation and fantasy are related notions which must be examined together, considering their intimate dealings with what is seen and heard' (Prot 2017, p. 781), which is crucial in the analysis of texts such as Barrie's, that shift from reality to fantasy from line to line.

She continues, using Freud's *A Child is Beaten* as a source of reinforcement for her argument, as she develops her previous comments on the definition of fantasy's interdependence on image and representation, connecting daydreaming and wish-fulfilment in order to address what fantasy can be:

> For fantasy can be synonymous with daydreaming and with the form of wish fulfilment that it presupposes; fantasy can concern a more or less rigid scenario, it can be a matter of a set scene such as 'A Child is Being Beaten', or with fantasying of a specific functioning of life, whether healthy or pathological. Fantasy can be, as Freud notes, a preserved untamed zone where the pleasure principle relieves the subject from the vicissitudes of life – it is like the subject's personal Yellowstone Park, but also a defensive safe haven where the individual gets lost. Fantasy's borders are unclear: it is halfway between the internal world with its pleasure principle and the external world with its constraint of reality. Fantasy can therefore take on the form of a compromise, as in 'A Child is Being Beaten'. (Prot 2017, p. 781)

With this approach towards fantasy in mind, applying it to Barrie's work gives it a deeper meaning, one that surpasses the figment of his imagination. On many occasions, the characters

find themselves, or something they are searching for to be 'lost', from Andrew in *Better Dead* following the stranger into the unknown, 'but you see I lost him in the Strand, after all' (Barrie 2018, p. 20), to Captain W in *The Little White Bird* losing his identity for a brief moment, 'I feel lost to-night without my smiles. I rose a moment ago to look for it in my mirror' (Barrie 2019, p. 60). The use of the word 'lost' gains momentum in accordance with the date when the novels were written, as earlier novels included just a few mentions, whilst later publications such as *Tommy and Grizel* have between 40 and 50 references. Hence, the question may be asked as to whether the character's disorientation can be deemed as a result of them becoming lost in the safe haven of fantasy to which Prot is referring. Furthermore, Barrie himself may be acknowledging and finding pleasure in the isolation of his fantasies – as each novel is released, so the next strays further and further from reality.

In the lead up to the reader's introduction to Peter Pan in *The Little White Bird,* Captain W's imagination starts to blossom, as realistic scenes and adjectives are replaced by fairies, flight and fantasies, specifically as the chapter entitled 'The Grand Tour of the Gardens' begins. In Chapter 1, Barrie's contingent relationship with Kensington Gardens was discussed, which highlighted his reliance on the serenity of its location, and its ability to fill him with a tranquillity as he walks through the fig trees. True to Barrie's style of writing, the influence of the Gardens transcends onto paper, framing the introduction of, not only Barrie's most well-known character, but also of one of the most recognised character in children's fiction of all time:

> The Serpentine begins near here. It is a lovely lake, and there is a drowned forest at the bottom of it. If you peer over the edge you can see the trees all growing upside down, and they say that at night there are also drowned stars in it. If so, Peter Pan sees them when he is sailing across the lake in the Thrush's Nest. A small part only of the Serpentine is in the Gardens, for soon it passes beneath a bridge to far away where the

> island is on which all the birds are born that become baby boys and girls. No one who is human, except Peter Pan (and he is only half human), can land on the island, but you may write what you want (boy or girl, dark or fair) on a piece of paper, and then twist it into the shape of a boat and slip it into the water, and it reaches Peter Pan's island after dark. (Barrie 1901, p. 67)

Peter's first mention intertwines several concepts within one paragraph, from night time signalling the barriers of the human psyche dropping slowly during sleep, to the familiar childhood memory of potential wish-fulfilment via a secret note twisted into a bottle, sailing down the river, its destination left in the hands of mother nature. The most palpable and intriguing sentence however, regards Peter's humanity – or rather half of it. Whilst every other vivid description alludes to scenes from a fairy tale fill the pages, it is Barrie's decision to describe Peter as 'only half human' that immediately and quite assertively creates a constant connection to reality, regardless of what adventures are to accompany the boy.

Peter's presence in *The Little White Bird* impacts the genre of the novel, as the primary characters change from people with names, jobs and family, to magical creatures with friends of the same status. There is, however, a constant stable connection to realism, as the fairies and birds are even expected to remain 'civil' during arguments, something that would be expected of someone whose tripartite model of personality has developed to allow their id and ego to establish, 'the fairies have their tiffs with the birds, but they usually give a civil answer to a civil question' (Barrie 1901, p. 70). There is a paragraph on the fifth page after Peter was first introduced, where chaos ensues within the garden, as all characters are seen to be in a state of sheer panic and fear, whilst even the fairies he writes about show they are subject to human emotions:

> To Peter's bewilderment he discovered that every fairy he met fled from him. A band of workmen, who were sawing down a toadstool, rushed away, leaving their tools behind them. A milkmaid turned her pail upside down and hid in it. Soon the Gardens

> were in an uproar. Crowds of fairies were running this away and that, asking each other stoutly, who was afraid, lights were extinguished, doors barricaded, and from the grounds of Queen Mab's palace came the rubadub of drums, showing that the royal guard had been called out. (Barrie 1901, p. 71)

This passage, bearing in mind the core theme of Barrie's *Peter Pan*, contradicts the Peter that Tinkerbell idolises, as the fairies here scatter as an attempt to avoid coming into contact with the human in their gardens. This transformation from magic hiding from Peter, to Peter becoming the source of magic, is addressed in Prot's article, as she claims, 'Freud at times inscribes conscious and unconscious fantasies in a process of permanent transformation, and now and again he sees these fantasies as an indestructible "bedrock"' (Prot 2017, p. 782). Here, she addresses how fantasies can be modified in an attempt to make them more or less powerful. Thus, in Barrie's case, he laid the foundation for Peter, introducing him into his world first, and slowly navigating it so Peter's world became a more pleasurable place to be than his own. Whilst *Peter Pan* begins with an introduction to Mrs. Darling, her husband, their three children, Nana the nanny/dog, the sense of normality fails to remain amongst the pages for long, in the words of Barrie, 'there never was a simpler happier family until the coming of Peter Pan' (Barrie 2012, p. 5).

As Peter makes his first appearance, Mrs. Darling tidies her children's minds, as the reader is told any good mother would be expected to do (Barrie 2012, p. 5). This reference to the mind of a child leads to a more in-depth discussion, with the narrator asking the question 'I don't know whether you have ever seen a map of a person's mind' (Barrie 2012, p. 6), and highlighting the difference between a map of physical body parts, and a map of the minds, 'doctors sometimes draw maps of other parts of you, and your own map can become intensely interesting, but catch them trying to draw a map of a child's mind, which is not only confused, but keeps going round' (Barrie 2012, p. 6). This description of a repeated cycle of thoughts,

beginning and ending at the same point, mirrors that of the boy who encompasses the title of the novel. It is not only Peter's mind that will forever be in a cycle of repetition without progression towards maturity; it will also be the theme of his life as he fails to grow old. Thus, Peter follows the same pattern as the one drawn on the map of a child's mind.

Therefore, in a novel where the protagonist is subject to permanent childhood, it is unsurprising that fantastical elements are in abundance throughout; it is the references to real-life scenarios that make the story intriguing. As Ian Rudge describes it, Barrie's *The Little White Bird* and *Peter Pan,* show 'that children's magic realist texts create a recognisably realist world into which the fantastic elements are introduced' (Rudge 2004, p. 128). Rudge establishes a distinction between fantasy and magic realism, as he discussed the presence of hesitation in magic realism is one of the defining differences separating the two. He asserts that hesitation is absent in the fantastic, 'the ambiguity between the understanding of events in terms of real and fantasy is missing from magic realist texts. Hesitation is not present in magic realism, as the fantastic events are unquestioned within the world of the text;' however, it reappears when the realism resurfaces. With fantasy, once something is explained, the reader must take that at face value, however, when realism is introduced, the hesitation sets in. Thus, for Rudge, *Peter Pan* would fall under his genre of magic realism, as the Darling children show hesitation towards flying, towards leaving home, and towards decision-making, 'but Wendy hesitated' (Barrie 2012, p. 24), 'John hesitated' (Barrie 2012, p. 29). Peter however, shows no hesitation at all, even in the most dangerous situations, 'they knew he would not scruple to ram them down with poles' (Barrie 2012, p. 78).

Overall, the scenes that occur within the parameters of the Darling children's bedroom act as the most prominent depiction of the switch from reality to fantasy. The Darling family's home and life are described with specific descriptions such as their house number of 14 (Barrie 2012, p. 2), and realistic worries, such as the potential threat of one of the children catching

mumps, measles or whooping-cough (Barrie 2012, p. 3). Money is a real worry for Mr. Darling, and the opinions of his peers was important to him, 'he sometimes wondered uneasily whether the neighbours talked. He has his position in the city to consider' (Barrie 2012, p. 3). Up until Peter's arrival, the novel primarily depicts realistic scenes within the household, as the narrator claims 'there never was a simpler happier family until the coming of Peter Pan' (Barrie 2012, p. 4), implying the worries they had were relatively superficial before the children's adventures began.

The first mention of Peter Pan is accompanied by a slight shift in genre, as Mrs. Darling continues to tidy, yet this time, she is organising her children's minds. The narrator then begins to discuss the Neverland, which is illuminated with descriptions of adventures and magical creatures. As Mrs. Darling tucks her children into bed at night, she sings to them, holding their hands whilst they drift off to sleep (Barrie 2012, p. 7). Peter's visit to the bedroom instigates the dramatic shift in genre, as his light, 'a thousand times brighter than the night-lights' (Barrie 2012, p. 14), symbolises the fantasy that awaits the children in the Neverland. The window in the bedroom acts as a symbol for the escape from reality, as Peter enters through the window, and the children leave for the Neverland through it also. The connection to the window in *The Little White Bird* reiterates Barrie's reliance on fantasy, as Peter realises the window that connects him to his past is permanently shut. Thus, the oscillation between the bedroom and the Neverland signify Barrie's fusion of reality and fantasy.

From his fictional novels that encompassed a recognisable life, to his whimsical, magic-filled tales of The Neverland, Barrie ensured he would never be accused of shirking the opportunity to explore various genres in his books. Whilst the tone that accompanies each genre allows for an indication of Barrie's thoughts and feelings, there is no clearer indication of his passion for fantasy greater than *Peter Pan*. As previous chapters have aimed to prove that

childhood is the preferred state of being for Barrie, his use of fantasy is no different, with the link between childhood and imagination ensuring the access to fantasy is as pure and vibrant as it can be. His novels can be seen as a progression, from acknowledging the weight of reality, to consequently, attempting to cope with such pressures. Ultimately, Barrie offered 'a fantasy that allowed adults a release from lives constrained by 'getting and spending' and into an imaginary world of adventure' (Kavey & Friedman 2009, p. 76). Thus, by doing so, Barrie created a form of catharsis for both himself and the reader, where accessing their inner child allowed them to revisit the more pleasurable experience of life through youthful eyes, as their consciousness fails to be weighed down by worries and woes. Without the burdens of adulthood, a sense of tranquillity and contentment can be accessed through Peter, a feeling one could only ever hope to achieve outside of the pages of the novel.

## Conclusion

> ‘Not a word would he utter about Peter Pan.
> “Please forget that,” he said, and his lips seemed to say, “I’m grown up now, you know.”
> But was Peter Davies the real Peter Pan?’ (Birkin 2003, pp. 26-27).

The legacy of *Peter Pan* was one that placed a great weight on the Llewelyn Davies children. All five of the boys were burdened by Barrie’s Peter Pan throughout their lives, each being referred to as Peter even in headlines of newspaper articles (Birkin 2003, p. 26). In particular, Peter Davies knew what it felt like to be seen as the personified Peter Pan due to their shared first name. However, the impact of the novel’s protagonist expanded beyond Barrie and those who were closest to him. The success of *Peter Pan* meant Barrie would forever be most known for his creation of the boy who never grew up. By juxtaposing Barrie’s first novel *Better Dead*, with his most admired *Peter Pan*, there is understandably a shift in genre, as Barrie begins with a satirical, pessimistic adult protagonist in Andrew, and goes on to develop an innocent boy-child that flies from responsibilities and accountability in Peter. Thus, by integrating these other novels into an argument that aims to prove Barrie uses imagination to pursue a higher consciousness, the development and progression of themes and issues within each novel all contribute in pointing towards Barrie’s undeniable apprehension towards adulthood and the menacing ticking of the clock of life.

The turmoil of his adolescent life consumed by death and grief can be attributed to Barrie’s cynical attitude towards life that is exhibited in *Better Dead*. However, this novel addresses the personal struggles an individual can endure as they attempt to integrate into society. Birkin refers to the pressure Barrie was under to succumb to societal expectations, and the constant barrage of opinions that overwhelmed him when he made decisions that

contradicted the norm. In letters written after he left university, Barrie explained how those who praised him felt perturbed by his decision to become an author after securing a degree (Birkin 2003, p. 46). These comments however, did not deter him, and he continued in his pursuit of the career he wanted, and not the one others wanted for him. This materialised in his novel *Better Dead*, as Andrew also felt the pressure of the life of an aspiring writer in Victorian Britain. Andrew, however, exhibits traits of confidence and self-assurance, as he walks hands in pocket – unapologetically, yet rational and balanced when questioned, 'when told that he must apologise, he did not see it, but was willing to argue the matter out' (Barrie 2018, p. 4). The satirical concept of creating job opportunities by disposing of the individuals that can no longer contribute to society, can be seen as Barrie's first attempt at addressing these concerns. *Better Dead* was 'written from his head, not from his heart' (Birkin 2003, p. 56), and as his writing progresses and more novels are created, Barrie can be seen to start writing from what resided in his heart.

Whilst his fiction opened a door to endless interpretations of ideas, themes and meanings behind his novels, his memoir *Margaret Ogilvy* provided the inescapable truth that surrounded his childhood. As death and finality flooded his mind from a young age, Barrie alludes to the astounding impact that comes from losing a close friend or relative, both physically and figuratively. Beginning with the loss of his brother David, the following passage in his memoir recalls the moment his mother learned of the shocking news, describing her reaction and in turn, his thought processes as a young boy of six:

> She had a son who was far away at school. I remember very little about him, only that he was a merry-faced boy who ran like a squirrel up a tree and shook the cherries into my lap. When he was thirteen and I was half his age the terrible news came, and I have been told the face of my mother was awful in its calmness as she set off to get between Death and her boy. We trooped with her down the brae to the wooden station, and I think I was envying her the journey in the mysterious wagons; I know we played around

> her, proud of our right to be there, but I do not recall it, I only speak from hearsay. Her ticket was taken, she had bidden us good-bye with that fighting face which I cannot see, and then my father came out of the telegraph-office and said huskily, "He's gone!" Then we turned very quietly and went home again up the little brae. But I speak from hearsay no longer; I knew my mother for ever now. (Barrie 2014, p. 3)

As the passage starts, the expectation of its development revolves around the death of David and how the family will react and process the devastating news. However, true to its title, Barrie repeatedly directs the reader's attention towards his mother, from her contradictory awful calmness, to her fighting face.

With his final sentence alluding to the end of his mother as he once knew her, this tumultuous moment in their lives not only took a brother and son from the Barrie family, it also took his mother and gave him a new one. In sentences that follow, Barrie describes her 'soft face', 'large charity' and her face, 'always delicate' (Barrie 2014, p. 3) from that moment on. The days that follow a sudden death in the family, specifically one of a child, are on the most part, unpredictable and often as traumatic as the event itself. Barrie's memoir is no exception, from the third page onwards exploring the bearing David's death had on his mother, 'she did laugh suddenly now and then… but by the time she came the soft face was wet again' (Barrie 2014, p. 5). Consequently, like the ripple effect that passes through a family after death, Barrie started to suffer, devoting his childhood and adolescence to keeping a record of her laughs (Barrie 2014, p. 5). Thus, through the raw and soul-bearing nature of the memoir, one can see quite transparently, why Barrie had his reservations around life and its path that ultimately always leads towards death.

Society's conventions and the possible consequences of self-driven decisions became a weight that Barrie found too heavy to carry without some form of release. His work, in order of their publication dates, seem to mirror his thought process, as he works through his approach towards the themes and meaning he wants to convey and address in each. *Better Dead*,

published in 1887, marked his initial tactic, satirically toying with the pressure society places on people to lead a successful and conventional life following a relatively specific path to their success, involving marriage, children and a promising career. Whilst *Better Dead* undeniably focuses on Andrew's quest for professional individuality in a conforming society, the initial hint of apprehension towards marriage can be seen, a theme that recurs and grows in magnitude as his texts progress. Characters are described by their marital status, 'the banker was unmarried' (Barrie 2018, p. 5), and the sentiment of marriage is called into question, 'once he settles down it does not much matter whom he marries' (Barrie 2018, p. 65). It became evident Barrie refrained from hiding his thoughts on marriage behind his words, as he uses *Better Dead* to reiterate his attitude towards the sacrament.

If his earliest novel didn't provide a clear enough image, Barrie continued to address the pressure he felt to conform to the societal concept of what married life should look like, the theme began to resurface in many of his written pieces. As previously mentioned in Chapter 2, Barrie wrote a piece for the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, addressing a nightmare he had, that assumed the shape of a woman he was marrying. This nightmare came to him as a boy, and he acknowledges that although his imagination had evolved, the dream was 'never the same, yet always recognisable' (Barrie 1887), alluding to the several possible options that are bound to face him when choosing a wife, yet the prospect of marriage is always just as daunting regardless. In his publication *Civilization and its Discontents*, Freud addresses the main issues that cause unhappiness for an individual, 'the three sources of our suffering: the superior power of nature, the frailty of our bodies, and the inadequacy of the institutions that regulate people's relations with one another in the family, the state and society' (Freud 2002, p. 50). All three of these can be seen to only become worries as one matures and no longer has the escape route that accompanies a lack of a developed conscience.

The issues that surrounded marriage, family and social conventions were presented

transparently in *Better Dead, Margaret Ogilvy* and his piece in *The Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*. It was not until Barrie tried his hand at fiction that he began to juxtapose the problem with the solution, once again, beginning with fictional stories based on real life events, to fictional stories soaked in fantastical elements. Freudian theory addresses the role of the unconscious in these infantile memories and their reoccurrence in adulthood:

> In psychoanalytic treatment we are regularly called upon to fill out the infantile memory gaps, and in so far as the cure is to any degree successful, we are able again to bring to light the content of the childhood years thus clouded in forgetfulness. These impressions have never really been forgotten, they have only been inaccessible, latent, have belonged to the unconscious. But sometimes they bob up out of the unconscious spontaneously, and, as a matter of fact, this is what happens in dreams. It is apparent that the dream life knows how to find the entrance to these latent, infantile experiences. Beautiful examples of this occur in literature. (Freud 2015, p. 290)

In childhood, Barrie experienced enough trauma to last a lifetime, and that is just what the unconscious does, ensures it will last throughout his existence, as the events of his past continue to materialise when the barriers to his unconscious mind are lowered. As he slept, his biggest fears presented themselves in the form of a nightmare, one that visited him most nights. As a child, forgetfulness is consumed by selfishness, one can forget an experience if the effects do not disrupt daily life. However, as the id, ego and superego, as discussed previously, begin to develop, the human conscience and unconscious mind start to grow and become fuelled by these human experiences. These experiences, as Freud explains above, are not simply discarded, they are in fact, stored and remain dormant until the psyche's defences are weakened.

The final line of the above quote rings true for Barrie's work, 'beautiful examples of this occur in literature' (Freud 2015, p. 290), with the contents of his unconscious mind spilling out onto the pages of his many novels. The chronological order of his work speaks volumes regarding the way in which his psyche worked at that particular time; his early works directly

address his worries and struggles, whilst his later works show the afflictions as part of the unconscious, after years of repression caused them to be relocated and made dormant whilst Barrie's coping mechanisms took control. The distinction between these two types of literature depict the dichotomy of Barrie's writing, 'the conflict between imagination/belief and knowledge/fact' (Kavey & Friedman 2009, p. 75). *Tommy and Grizel, Sentimental Tommy, The Little White Bird,* and *Peter Pan* are all illustrative of his reconnection with his imagination, an instrument that allowed him to write a children's novel with fairies and pirates as core characters, whilst simultaneously playing with the premise of death, 'she was to be left on the rock to perish, an end to one of her race more terrible than death by fire or torture… she was the daughter of a chief, she must die as a chief's daughter' (Barrie 2012, p. 110).

Though Freud's theories on the human psyche provided a crucial framework for determining the possible reasons why adulthood was such a traumatic state of being for Barrie, Freud's publication *The Interpretation of Dreams,* provided a much needed insight into the occurrence and significance of dreams in Barrie's writing. Aside from the nightmare he wrote about in *The Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, each of Barrie's fictional novels, memoirs and letters are filled with references to dreams and day-dreams, from the second page of *Better Dead*, 'every girl has her day-dreams' (Barrie 2018, p. 2) to the sixth page from the end of *Margaret Ogilvy,* 'ah, beautiful dream' (Barrie 2014, p. 72). While speaking about how he knows what Thrums looks like, Tommy, in *Sentimental Tommy* claims, '"I ain't sure," said Shovel, "p'raps I dreamed on it." "That's it," Tommy cried. "I tell yer, everybody dreams on it!" and Tommy was right; everybody dreams of it, though not all call it Thrums' (Barrie 2007, p. 17). Tommy's claim that the location fails to hold one specific name alludes to Barrie's quest for inner peace, implying that whilst everyone dreams of a place of idyllic beauty, it is an entirely subjective location, as each person will fill it with their own fantasies.

Whilst reading Barrie's texts, without the use of psychoanalysis, the dreams he

describes remain at surface level. With the help of Freudian theories, one begins to uncover the meaning behind them, opening a tunnel to access the subconscious mind that was responsible for the creation of the dream. Freud addresses the importance of dream analysis in his book *The Interpretation of Dreams*:

> Thus we are not only faced by the question 'How can distressing dreams and anxiety-dreams be wish-fulfilments?'; our reflections enable us to add a second question: 'Why is it that dreams with an indifferent content, which turn out to be wish-fulfilments, do not express their meaning undisguised?' Take, for instance, the dream which I treated at such length of Irma's injection. It was not by any means of a distressing nature and interpretation showed it as a striking example of the fulfilment of a wish. (Freud 2010, p. 161)

Freud's reference to Irma's dream, as discussed in Chapter 3, is a prime example of a dream that would not have been fully understood had Freud not analysed the meaning behind it. As it was not distressing in nature, it could have gone under the radar and forgotten relatively quickly. However, Freud determined there was a significant underlying meaning to be taken from its occurrence. He continues:

> But why should it have needed any interpretation at all? Why did it not say what it meant straight out? At first sight the dream of Irma's injection gave no impression that it represented a wish of the dreamer's as fulfilled. My readers will have had no such impression; but neither did I myself before I carried out the analysis. Let us describe this behaviour of dreams, which stands in so much need of explanation, as 'the phenomenon of distortion in dreams.' Thus our second problem is: what is the origin of dream-distortion? (Freud 2010, p. 161)

It was only through this analysis Freud concluded that his dream was a wish fulfilment, one that aimed to rid him of any guilt surrounding the care of his patient. With this in mind, both Barrie and his character's dreams took on a new meaning, as psychoanalysis prompted the

analysis of each to allow an in-depth exploration of Barrie's mind.

One theme that repeatedly resurfaced in many of Barrie's dream descriptions is the concept of marriage. Whilst social concepts weighed heavily on Barrie, psychoanalysis allowed the context of Barrie's life to provide an insight into these dreams. From his earliest novel, dreams embodied an escape, showing Andrew, unimpressed having been interrupted from his dream in *Better Dead*, 'Andrew had been dreaming, and the jerk woke him to the roar of London' (Barrie 2018, p. 13). Not only was he woken from his slumber, the description of the noisy city of London shows it was a more peaceful state, and London is a stark contrast to the place he was temporarily transported to in his dreams. In *Tommy and Grizel*, being in a dreamlike state became an instinctive experience, as Tommy 'dreamed constantly' (Barrie 2009, p. 25), spoke 'dreamily' (Barrie 2009, p. 24), and came to the conclusion that his 'dream intruding on reality' (Barrie 2009, p. 81). He associates dreams with reconnecting the mind with one's true self, emphasising the importance of executing a smooth transition between dreams and reality, 'it brought him back to himself, but without a start. Those sudden returns to fact had ceased to bewilder him; they were grown so common that he passed between dreams and reality as through tissue-paper' (Barrie 2009, p. 127). For a novel that followed the lives of two adults, the twenty-two mentions of the word 'dream', echoed Barrie's deliberate attempts to escape reality in a way that comes much more naturally to children.

'"But was it, then, all a dream? he cried, nearly convinced for the first time, and he went into the arbour saying determinedly that it was a dream' (Barrie 2009, p. 285). While *Tommy and Grizel* is a fictional novel written by Barrie, the characters embody realistic traits, following daily routines akin to those familiar to the reader. However, the theme of fantasy begins to emerge, as he poses the question 'was it all a dream?' (Barrie 2009, p. 285). Alison Kavey discusses how, regardless of the genre of his work, 'the seemingly rational London world that Barrie constructs to mirror our own sense of reality contains at least canine scraps

of fantasy that would not be out of place in Peter's The Neverland of mermaids, fairies, and pirates' (Kavey & Friedman 2009, p. 192). The creation of *Peter Pan*, although a stark contrast to novels such as *Better Dead* in terms of characters, genre, and plot, was nevertheless, an inevitable culmination of underlying themes alluded to in previous novels.

With dreams present, the door for fantasy is left ajar, and as time passed and Barrie leaned into his subconscious more, his literature became more fantasy-laden. Writing about his dreams allowed him to access another realm, and thus, the introduction of the element of fantasy allowed one of the most recognised characters, Peter Pan, to be created. *The Little White Bird*'s introductory pages are reminiscent of Barrie's transition into adulthood, as Captain W deals with complex relationships, finding solace in the loyalty and sincerity that comes from companionship with a child, as he too found in his own relationships with the Llewelyn Davies boys. The complications begin when adults are brought into the equation. On the first page, as the reader is introduced to the protagonist, he tells of the young boy David whom he seems to have a friendship with that surpasses a surface-level bond. Though Barrie spoke of his close relationship with his own mother, it was one of constant dismay and disappointment in stark contrast to the bonds he created with children. On the first page of the novel, once David's mother is mentioned, it takes a mere four sentences before Captain W has his 'delicious dream' (Barrie 2019, p. 5), suggesting the protagonist has experienced a sudden need for escape.

This dream, in one paragraph addresses a number of pressing issues for Barrie; age, 'I dreamt that I too was twenty-six' (Barrie 2019, p. 5), belonging, 'I took a train to a place called home' (Barrie 2019, p. 5) grief, 'when I alighted at the station a dear lost love was waiting for me' (Barrie 2019, p. 5), emptiness, 'she met me in no ecstasy of emotion' (Barrie 2019, p. 5), marriage, 'it was as if we had been married for years and parted for a day' (Barrie 2019, p. 5) and equality, 'I like to think that I gave her some of the things to carry' (Barrie 2019, p. 5).

Captain W immediately follows this with possible outcomes if he were to relay his dream to David's mother, showing the reintroduction of over-thinking when speaking to another adult, in contrast to the comfort he feels when in conversation with little David alone, 'has it ever been your lot, reader, to be persecuted by a pretty woman who thinks, without a title of reason, that you are bowed down under a hopeless partiality for her?' (Barrie 2019, p. 5). The tone he created with his 'delicious' dream plummets the reader back to reality, as words such as 'deluded', 'poor' and 'shame' readjust the air of the story. Consequently, after analysing this paragraph, it comes as no great surprise how Barrie's novel that uses realism to initiate the story, shifts in genre, using fantasy to ascend the story into a fantastical atmosphere. As *The Little White Bird's* mid-section mentions Peter Pan on page 84, the beginning of Barrie's complete use of imagination as a coping mechanism can be seen to take the reins, 'no one who is human, except Peter Pan (and he is only half human), can land on the island' (Barrie 2019, p. 88).

As previously alluded to, Weiss' article highlighted Freud's theories on *phantasy*, whilst reality remains an ever increasing weight pressing on him, he saw the use of fantasy as a tool where underlying wishes and desires can prosper (Weiss 2017, p. 799). Connecting fantasy to reality, Weiss also highlights how Freud acknowledges they are never too far from each other. Prot's analysis of Freud's contribution to understanding the use of fantasy in literature establishes a framework for the analysis of his most distinguished work *Peter Pan*. Discussed in Chapter 8, Prot's claim, 'fantasy can be, a preserved untamed zone where the pleasure principle relieves the subject from the vicissitudes of life – it is like the subject's personal Yellowstone Park, but also a defensive safe haven where the individual gets lost' (Prot 2017, pp. 780 – 781) along with Weiss' observations on Freudian concepts work congruently to deconstruct the reason behind Barrie's extreme shift in genre from *Better Dead* to *Peter Pan.*

These fantastical elements consumed *Peter Pan,* and the use of flight for his main

character proved to be much more than a mode of transport. In the first chapter of the novel, Peter and Wendy share a conversation where Peter urges Wendy to fly with her to meet the other boys. Whilst a half human (Barrie 2019, p. 88) Peter fails to give it a second thought, Wendy is much more hesitant as he considers the consequences of her actions and decision making:

> "Let me go!" she ordered him.
> "Wendy, do come with me and tell the other boys."
> Of course she was very pleased to be asked, but she said, "Oh dear, I can't. Think of mummy! Besides, I can't fly."
> "I'll teach you."
> "Oh, how lovely to fly."
> "I'll teach you how to jump on the wind's back, and then away we go." "Oo!" she exclaimed rapturously.
> "Wendy, Wendy, when you are sleeping in your silly bed you might be flying about with me saying funny things to the stars."
> "Oo!"
> "And, Wendy, there are mermaids." "Mermaids! With tails?"
> "Such long tails."
> "Oh," cried Wendy, "to see a mermaid!" (Barrie 2012, p. 42)

The fantastical element of flight here signifies Peter's leverage on Wendy; as a developing child her conscience is beginning to form, which encourages her to consider the aftermath of spontaneous decisions. Peter, on the other hand, as a forever child, does not have the same ties to reality, and therefore, uses flight to fly himself from responsibilities without a second thought. However, Wendy is still a child, and is susceptible to the temptation Peter teases her with. Birkin alludes to the half human side of Peter that Barrie mentions in *The Little White Bird*, stating, 'it is the fairies who teach him to fly without wings… he flies home to watch his mother weeping for her lost child, and is moved by her tears; but always the freedom of the

Gardens calls him back' (Birkin 2003, p. 150). Freedom becomes a key word here – whilst Peter acknowledges the emotions his mother experiences, the pursuit of freedom comes from flying away from the scene and back to the gardens.

Freud's suggestion of flight as a defence mechanism (Freud 2017, p. 367) can be seen in Barrie's *Peter Pan*, with Peter entering and exiting difficult situations with unimaginable ease. The Darling children fail to fly with the ease Peter experiences, and one sentence said by Peter in Chapter 3 explains why, '"you just think lovely wonderful thoughts," Peter explained, "and they lift you up in the air."' (Barrie 2012, p. 46). Whilst Peter and the Darling children have childhood in common, their commonalities are limited by time. Each of the Darling children will eventually grow up, their minds will develop and they will mature. Freudian theory states each phase of childhood represents a different developmental stage that correlates with the establishment of the conscious and subconscious mind. Whilst the Darling children are all at different stages of their development, they differ from Peter, as they are continuously developing. Every adventure, every interaction, every trauma aids in the formation of the adults they will become, which means it is not as easy for them to clear their minds of thoughts that may weigh them down. Barrie uses Peter as the tool to access a state of oblivion, where responsibilities no longer halt him from access to his escape route.

Freud discusses the five developmental stages the Darling children and all other children experience in his publication, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. According to Freud, an interruption during any of the stages manifests in a disorder in adulthood. Furthermore, the result of a fixation can cause complex and unstable sexual relationships during as an adult. Whilst it is hard to establish whether Barrie's traumatic childhood may have caused several interruptions for his own development, the moment his brother died meant he was catapulted out of his comfort blanket of immaturity, and into the real world Of responsibilities, a much more uncomfortable place to be. Using Freudian theory, Barrie's

questionable approach to forming relationships can be traced back to these times, when most children continued to mature naturally. The relationship between Barrie and the Llewelyn Davies boys was one that would be the topic of scrutiny for years due to society's perception of what a healthy friendship looked like – typically shared between people of similar ages and stages of life. Barrie proved however, that his life would never be one of conformity. With his assumed asexuality although married to Mary Ansell, his novels and letters became symbolic of this breakdown in expectations:

> Barrie's engagement to Mary Ansell was now being confidently predicted in most of London's society magazines and gossip columns, but Barrie declined either to confirm or deny the rumours. He was caught in a crossfire of conflicting emotions. On the one hand he was 'in love' with Mary— as much as he felt he was ever likely to be with a woman—and she was certainly in love with him. On the other hand he knew full well that he was temperamentally unsuited to married life. (Birkin 2003, p. 73)

Society provided a framework for the perfect life; wife, children and successful career. Barrie, however, found the prospect of marriage a pressurised concept. The purest love he could experience came in the most unconventional way, from the Llewelyn Davies boys, and despite the scrutiny of the society he lived in, he knew the children possessed attributes the adults in his life had lost long ago.

As a result of utilising Freudian theories to analyse Barrie's texts, an abundance of information can be gathered from a comparison of his protagonists. Character interactions such as Andrew's in *Better Dead,* although we have little information about his childhood experiences, speak volumes for his developmental stages as an adult, 'more than two years have passed since Andrew's marriage, and already the minister has two sweet grandchildren, in whom he renews his youth. Except during school-hours their parents' married life is one long honeymoon' (Barrie 2018, p. 65). The only mention of their married life revolves around their children. Whilst some couples may enjoy some alone time together, their happiest hours are

when their children come home from school and they are all together, as they renew their youth through them, 'except during school-hours their parents' married life is one long honeymoon' (Barrie 2018, p. 65). Barrie failed to have children of his own, but through the Llewelyn Davies boys, he found a form of catharsis, the children he referred to as 'my boys' (Birkin 2003, p. 484). Similarly, Tommy's character was first developed as an adult in *Tommy and Grizel,* however, Barrie knew childhood experiences and development were monumental for character formation, and thus, he decided he needed to give young Tommy the chance to be known by the reader by writing the Bildungsroman, *Sentimental Tommy.* Through Tommy, Barrie exhibited himself, knowing his adult personality was indicative of his developmental years.

The reader has no background information on Captain W when introduced to the character in *The Little White Bird.* He continuously voices his disgust towards David's mother, as soon as within the first paragraph of the novel. Barrie's memoir *Margaret Ogilvy* mentions his father briefly, but the premise of the text is built on Margaret as his mother and not Margaret as a wife. Women in Barrie's novels all seem to be dependent on their roles as mothers, regardless of their marital status. Whilst this can be seen to stem from Barrie's unstable relationship with his own mother, Freudian theory also acknowledges the impact of interrupted sexual development on adult relationships, as marriages are reduced to the ability to procreate, and the focus is never placed on love between the couple.

Mr and Mrs. Darling, a married couple in *Peter Pan* are referred to with their second name throughout the novel, and Mrs. Darling is always given her married title. Mrs. Darling is introduced to the reader on the first page, as Wendy's mother. When Mr. Darling appears, the first thing known of him is how he won his wife, and 'got all of her' (Barrie 2012, p. 2). Barrie sets a scene for the adults in this novel, a clear indication of the contrast between the family within the household, and the adventures that lie outside the walls of the Darling home. The paragraph that follows, states how Mr. Darling knows Mrs. Darling loves him, and so the

pattern continues; like Andrew saw the 'love-light' in Carrie's eyes (Barrie 2018, p. 2), like Tommy knew Grizel 'always loved him' (Barrie 2009, p. 31) like Captain W assumed he was being 'pursued' (Barrie 2019, p. 5) by David's mother, and like Barrie knew Mary Ansell adored him.

Kavey addresses the gender roles within Mr and Mrs. Darling's relationship, with the couple conforming to the societal expectations set for the male/female binary, the male as provider and the female as caregiver, with the family ensuring they stay within the conforms of society 'Mr. Darling had a passion for being exactly like his neighbours' (Barrie 2012, p. 4). Mrs. Darling seems excited for her role within the household, yet her real passion appears to revolve around her own children:

> Mrs. Darling's missing pieces belong, not to the real world, but to the imagined one that she inhabits while performing as a wife to her husband and mother to her children. Ironically, that imagination, at least at the beginning of the story, is entirely dominated by the storylines of weddings and maternity. She begins the story as the most desirable girl of her generation, and she enters into her marriage with remarkable enthusiasm for her new job of managing the household… The future she imagines for herself is entirely defined by the role of motherhood, and instead of spending her afternoons in The Neverland, she spends them imagining the children she wants to have. This version of imagination is shaped by cultural expectations for women of her social class and thus is different from The Neverlands crafted by children. (Kavey & Friedman 2009, p. 101)

Barrie establishes a binary between men and women, but Kavey also highlights the differences between the adult versus childhood imagination. As 'The Neverlands vary a great deal' (Barrie 2012, p. 8), Mrs. Darling's The Neverland is crafted from the expectation to fulfil the ideal role of motherhood, whilst the Darling children's island is full of fairies, wolves, and pirates. Thus, Barrie exhibits the importance of a The Neverland supported by a child, as Mrs. Darling's imagination is fuelled by societal influences. Peter, although halted in years, has

been alive much longer than any of Barrie's other characters. With various references to Tinkerbell's fondness of him, Peter fails to succumb to societal expectations of how males would act when admired by a female. Whilst the young boys are free to play in The Neverland, Wendy is very much expected to ascertain her maternal instinct whilst in The Neverland, regardless of her age. Peter repeatedly blurs the line that separates the binaries that characters such as Andrew, Captain W, Tommy, and the Darling's adhere to.

With all the burdens surrounding adulthood weighing heavily on Barrie, it came as no surprise that his novels addressed what he saw as the impending misery that accompanies the passing of time. Freud's theory on the stages of sexual development marked significant stages of maturity, and most importantly for Barrie, change. With change, came more responsibilities and social constructs to adhere to which all have an impact on the subconscious mind. Thus, to find a way to combat bring this change to a halt, meant finding a key to a consciousness free from the weight of burdens. His memoir *Margaret Ogilvy* features several references to specific periods of time showing even as a child, Barrie found himself noticing the direction each arrow pointed on the clock at significant life events, 'she died at 7 o'clock on Wednesday evening' (Barrie 2014, p. 12). However, he also explains that all the years before he turned six were 'guess- work' (Barrie 2014, p. 2), showing the accuracy of his childhood memory began specifically at that age, the age he was when his brother David died suddenly. The change in Barrie was instigated by the occurrence of death, with the finality of life drawing his attention to each passing moment

The premise of change in Barrie's work surrounds, primarily, the transition between childhood and adulthood, the most significant loss during this period concerning the loss of innocence. Barrie portrays the adult protagonists in his novels to exemplify this, as Andrew, a satirical narcissist spends his time under the weight of society's gavel, while Tommy and Captain W are bemused with the bombardment of female admiration. All of these characters

have one thing in common, they are subjects of the passing of time. As discussed in Chapter 7, Freud's theory on the death drive investigates humanity's innate instinct that causes a tendency to turn to self-destruction by repeating unsolicited damaging behaviours (Freud 1961, p. 32). Andrew, Tommy, Captain W, Mr. and Mrs. Darling to name a few, all follow this sequence, regardless of the palpable inevitability of the repercussions of their actions on their lives. The introduction of Peter Pan, inspired by the Llewelyn Davies boys, was the key to the lock that holds the cycle together, with any references to time regarding the boy becoming less specific in contrast to Barrie as a six-year-old boy, 'after a time he fell asleep' (Barrie 2012, p. 93). A young boy, unaffected by death, released from responsibilities, liberated from binaries, interrupted from growth and unhindered by the passing of time offered a solution to the release J. M. Barrie needed from his own life, represented in the form of a fictional character, became his access route to a selfish and therefore, carefree, heightened sense of consciousness.

> 'The difference between him and the other boys at such a time was that they knew it was make-believe, while to him make-believe and true were exactly the same thing' (Barrie 2012, p. 88).

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