

Disciplines of Virtue: Girls' Culture in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries by Lynne Vallone. New Haven: Yale UP, 1995. x, 230 pp. ISBN 0-300-06172-2, \$25.00.

Lynne Vallone's book, *Disciplines of Virtue: Girls' Culture in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, argues for the significance and complexity of girls' culture in the last two centuries in Britain and America, as revealed and structured by literature, social practices, and cultural institutions. Vallone examines a wide variety of written texts, including adolescent and adult literature, conduct books, and religious tracts; she considers them in conjunction with the dowry and dower systems, penitentiaries for wayward women, and the founding of the domestic science movement. Along with its feminist focus, Vallone's book participates in the growing trend toward cultural studies by looking at non-literary material in its assessment of how girls were viewed in Britain and America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. *Disciplines of Virtue* is smart, well written, and well worth reading.

Vallone studies the British and American adolescent girl "and her culture's attempts to anticipate, remark and control" her growth (2). As she points out, the book cannot even "attempt to cover the entire field of girls' culture" (2), certainly not the range of eras and cultures included; indeed, the process of selection is both the book's strength and weakness, since--especially for those of us interested in the Pre-Raphaelites--the omissions here are glaring, despite the fact that the fascinating juxtapositions of what is included are finally dependent on what must be excluded, if only in the interest of space.

The book's six chapters move in very rough chronological order, with many revisitations to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts dealt with earlier in the book at appropriate moments in later chapters; *Pamela* is the touchstone to which every argument returns. The book also moves spatially from British culture in the first two-thirds of the study to American culture in the final chapters, again with numerous trips back across the Atlantic for comparison. The range of material is impressive and allows for an unusual degree of synthesis, a refreshing and exciting aspect of this book.

The first chapter describes the eighteenth-century British institution of penitentiaries for reformed prostitutes, concentrating on London's Magdalen Hospital. This section not only reads a cultural practice that defines a particular kind of girlhood, but it also provides historical context for discussion of novels that deal with youth, gender, class, sexuality, and charity in later chapters. Chapter 2 examines Richardson's *Pamela* – in both its original form and in its first abridgement for children in 1756 – through the lens of Hannah Wooley's 1675 conduct manual, *The Gentlewoman's Companion*. The third chapter looks at how dowries functioned in eighteenth-century England in legal, journalistic (since, as Vallone explains, dowry size was often reported in the wedding pages), and literary