The pauper problem:

How and why was childhood poverty problematised by the Ragged School Union between 1844 and 1864?

'Oh, is it not sad that the poor wretched children
Who know not the Saviour must perish and die;
Whilst Satan stands eagerly ready to grasp them,
And death and destruction are hovering nigh.'

- 'A plea for the outcasts',
The Ragged School Magazine, 1864 p.198.

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'A street arab or street Mary', unknown source

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Introduction

Nineteenth-century Britain witnessed an increasing polarity in the class system, as the *nouveau riche* benefitted from the industrialisation of the country, whereas those forced to work long hours for pitiful wages found it impossible to climb the economic ladder. The influx of workers into cities in the hope of finding fortune led to over-crowing and the emergence of slum dwellings, resulting in impoverished children becoming an increasingly visible fixture of cities. Following the publication of social commentaries in middle-class newspapers during the 1830s and '40s, the conditions that poor children were forced to bear became more known to the general public. In response 'child-saving' movements emerged, representing an amalgamation of the concerns that had developed. Most fundamentally these groups hoped to *'save those unfortunate children'*,[1] and alleviate their suffering. Plainly, the seeds of modern social work are found in the child-saving movements, as this era witnessed the emergence of two enduring British children's charities; Barnardo's and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Added to these concerns about child-welfare were anxieties about society, as poverty became a watchword for criminality, and fears that *'the present system was* […] *recruiting for crime'*[2] grew in prominence. More intensely, the child-savers were motivated by fear of the *'displacement of the whole system of society'*,[3] as the destructive potential of the working-class was being displayed across the continent. The rhetoric used to describe the pauper problem rolled these concerns into one great issue, creating an emotive crisis that had to be addressed.

The various movements were united in their aim to break the perceived pattern of deprivation to depravation through the medium of education, which was intended to equip the street-children to earn a living. The ragged school movement was part of the wider child-saving crusade, yet it was set apart by its core religious values and intention to Christianise the children. These schools provided young outcasts with education and often food, as well as offering the most talented children the opportunity of commencing a new life in Australia or Canada. This movement was entirely dependent on financial support from the public, and therefore the importance of effectively communicating the pauper problem was paramount within its campaign. As a result, the ragged school movement provides an engaging case-study of problematisation, as their documents plainly exemplify how conflicting arguments can be woven together to create an urgent problem, resulting in the sensationalising of the topic in hand. Reflecting this, the leading question of this research is:

The pauper problem: How and why was childhood poverty problematised by the Ragged School Union between 1844 and 1864?

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[1] 'The reform of juvenile offenders', *The Observer*, 25 June 1848, p.5.
[2] 'The reform of juvenile offenders', *The Observer*, 25 June 1848, p.5.
[3] A. Ashley-Cooper, 'Moral and religious education of the working classes: the speech of Lord Ashley, M.P., in the House of Commons on Tuesday, February 28, 1843', *Hume Tracts* (1843).

Theory

This research demonstrates how the pauper problem was developed in ragged school documents through rhetoric that compounded prevalent concerns regarding street-children. In the body of this study the way that the ragged school movement's language aimed to mobilise the British public into action is deconstructed, and the problematising impact of the words is assessed. Marlou Schrover has defined problematisation as *'a process in which actors (academics, politicians, journalists) analyse a situation, define it as a problem, expand it by attaching issues to it, and finally suggest a solution'.*[4] . Two typologies of problematisation can be distinguished within media discourse; 'doom' problematisation, wherein a problem is formed and sensationalised, and 'hope' problematisation, which forms a problem, while also providing an 'escape route' by proposing a solution. This study exemplifies hopeful problematisation, as in order to maintain financial support and avoid extinction, it was essential for the ragged school movement to convey the solvability of the pauper problem, while also expressing its enduring nature.

In relation to the impact of problematisation, Stanley Cohen's investigation of moral panics has shown how problematisation can culminate in a *'moral enterprise'*, during which *'the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people'.*[5] Further, Cohen has shown how certain groups can be defined as dangerous by *'symbolization'*, a process by which a word (such as 'street-child') becomes symbolic of a certain status, character, or behaviour. Symbolization results in the term being *'torn from any previously neutral contexts* […] *and* [acquiring] *wholly negative meanings'.*[6] This thesis shows how child poverty was problematised by the ragged schools through the *'tactical linkage of issues'*,[7] as the movement linked child poverty with infectious disease, criminality, and the threat of revolution, thereby associating child poverty with wider contemporary problems. Following on from this, this research demonstrates that by presenting ragged schools as 'the answer' to child poverty, they were, by association, also the answer to the attached problems referred to above, and therefore the movement created a powerfully convincing formula for responding to child poverty.

The exclusion of street-children from society was an essential factor in the problematisation of child poverty in this case-study. Consequently, a key theoretical outline for this research is the assertion that groups can be categorised and ostracised from society. For this reason this thesis incorporates Howard Becker's theory that *'social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance and by applying those rules to particular persons and labelling them*

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[4] M. Schrover, 'Problematisation and particularisation: The Bertha Hertogh story', *Tijdschrift voor sociale en economische geschiedenis* 8:2 (2011) pp.3-31, p.4.
[5] S. Cohen, *Folk devils and moral panics* (Oxford 1980), p.11.
[6] Cohen, *Folk devils*, p.40.
[7] Cohen, *Folk devils*, p.5.

as outsiders',[8] in other words 'deviancy' is relative to society. Building on this, this research also utilises Cohen's theory that members of the deviant group become identifiable according to a signature style or activity, which acts as a *'"badge of delinquency"'*,[9] a notion flowing from his theory of symbolization mentioned above. In relation to middle-class constructions of normality and deviancy, the theoretical framework behind Lucia Zedner's research on female criminality is expanded upon during this case-study.[10] Zedner has argued that women were perceived as deviant when they failed to match the Victorian concept of femininity; *'the seriousness of female crimes was measured primarily in terms of women's failure to live up to the requirements of the feminine ideal'*.[11] This research expands Zedner's theory to encompass street-children, as it is shown that they too were defined as deviant because of their failure to comply with middle-class social norms. It is shown that impoverished children were removed from the circle of society and placed in their own sub-culture, as they became 'the Other', a group defined according to their divergence from the norm. Nancy Armstrong's study of *Wuthering Heights* in the light of the creation of outsiders has provided further understanding as to how the middle-class created sub-cultures in order to solidify control; *'By reclassifying the primitive folk as charmingly archaic versions of themselves, educated Englishmen could enjoy domain over them'*.[12] During this research, Armstrong's theory is extended beyond the rural parts of the British Isles, which is the focus of her article, to urban street-children.

Beyond these theories of deviancy and sub-culture, this thesis analyses how the ragged schools intended to integrate this deviant group into society. The theories mentioned here have not assessed if or how outsiders can be brought into the confines of normal society, which is a central idea in the ragged schools' plan to eliminate the pauper problem. Evidently the ragged schools categorised the children as deviants, however this categorisation was not static, as the children were also adopted and brought into society within ragged school texts. As has been mentioned, the ragged schools offered the most talented students the opportunity of emigration, which arguably meant they were not actually integrated into British society. Nevertheless, this study is based upon the arguments used within ragged school texts, and does not intend to show whether the children were, in fact, successfully integrated. Rather, this thesis focuses on how the schools proposed to bring the children into society, and the image of the reformed street-child that the movement communicated. It has been mentioned that the ragged schools' apparent ability to solve the pauper problem was the very crux of their campaign, without which they would be defunct. Consequently, the communication of their 'finished product', the transformed street-child, had to powerfully embody the success of the movement. In relation to this, Anna Davin's research on the portrayal of waifs in Victorian children's

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[8] H. Becker, as quoted in Cohen's *Folk devils*, p.13.
[9] Cohen, *Folk devils*, p.41
[10] L. Zedner, 'Women, crime, and penal responses: A historical account', *Crime and Justice*, 14 (1991) pp.307-362.
[11] Zedner, 'Women, crime, and penal responses', p.320.
[12] N. Armstrong, 'Emily's ghost: The cultural politics of Victorian fiction, folklore, and photography', *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 25:3 (Spring 1992) pp. 245-267, p.253.

stories has commented on the middle-class traits the 'saved' waifs adopted as a signifier of their entrance into society.[13] This analysis of the ragged schools will show how the adoption of middle-class values played a significant role in symbolising the street-child's transformation into a 'home-child', and re-integration into society.

Leading on from how child poverty was problematised, this research also aims to identify the main motivations behind this particular child-saving movement. In line with Armstrong's ideas about middle-class control mentioned above, Anthony Platt[14] and Timothy Gilfoyle[15] have argued that the driving force behind the American child-savers was the perceived need for increased social control. However, this analysis of the ragged school movement clearly shows that this was not the sole motivating force in this case. By exploring the concerns continually expressed in the ragged school texts, it is evident that fears of disease, crime, revolution, and irreligion were all factors that had an immediate influence on the movement. Less directly, the basic underlying presumption that it is possible to instigate change and eventually solve these social problems plainly had a considerable, but unquantifiable, effect on the leaders of the ragged schools.

Stemming from the theories that have been cited, this research shows the pauper problem's construction, expansion, and proposed solution across the ragged school's documents. Essentially, this research ties together the basic components of problematisation, as the interacting notions of problem linkage, othering, categorisation, and solvability are examined. With the purpose of identifying these problematising mechanisms in ragged school documents, this thesis analyses the arguments, language and imagery used to describe the pauper problem.

Historiography

Historians of the child-savers have been tempted to overlook the amalgamation of influences that acted upon the movement. Scholars have stressed the influence of humanitarian concern, the fear of criminality, and evangelical fervour in varying degrees, and have tended to attribute a 'greatest cause'. This thesis intends to demonstrate how the pauper problem was heightened, while acknowledging the wide array of incentives that lay behind the educational movement. The diversity of authorship of the ragged school articles being analysed means it is precarious to attribute one of the above factors as the most significant. Rather, the common intention of the texts to problematise the issue and instigate

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[13] A. Davin, 'Waif stories in late nineteenth century England', *History Workshop Journal* 52 (Autumn 2001) pp.67-98.
[14] A. Platt, 'The rise of the child-saving movement: A study in social policy and correctional reform', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 381 (January 1969) pp.21-38.
[15] T. Gilfoyle, 'Street-rats and gutter-snipes: Child pickpockets and street culture in New York City, 1850-1900', *Journal of Social History* 37:4 (Summer 2004) pp.853-882.

action in order to obtain the public's support acts as a unifying agent.

The problematising function of alienating and intimidating language in relation to street-children has been overwhelmingly neglected by historians. Linda Mahood and Barbara Littlewood's study of the middle-class response to impoverished children in Scotland has overlooked the question of the possible purpose of the imagery, simply labelling it as *'indiscriminate signifiers of inferiority and otherness'*, and little more than *'class racism'*.[16] Similarly, H.W. Schupf's analysis of the ragged schools[17] has focused on their structure, rather than on what is revealed through the presentation of the children within reports. Hugh Cunningham[18] has given the most attention to the topic of the middle-class' attitude towards the street-children, dedicating a chapter to the use of racial and animalistic terms in reference to children. Though he states that the use of extreme 'othering' language was symbolic of the vast difference between the middle-class and the poor, he fails to explore the intended effect. Studies of the ragged schools have so far overlooked the systematic problematisation of child poverty, a fact this research aims to remedy. It is shown in this thesis that the language used in ragged school texts carried greater significance than has been noted up to this point, as it was a means by which the authors communicated the crucial needs of the children and motivated the reading audience to assist the ragged school movement. In relation to the formation of a national problem, Davin has commented on the interlinking of the street-child with national wellbeing. She has noted that during the Victorian period children were increasingly seen as the *'future of the nation, their welfare a vital part of the imperialist project'*.[19] This analysis of the ragged schools looks further into this idea of the 'nationalisation' of the pauper problem by assessing how the schools attempted to expand the pauper problem beyond areas where juvenile delinquency was pandemic, to those where street-children were non-existent.

In addition, by studying the depiction of street-children in ragged school documents this research contributes to the more general historical analysis of the portrayal of poor children. J.M. Feheney's[20] research on Victorian juvenile delinquency has focused on the depiction of Irish Catholic children. This research builds upon Feheney's work by showing how the whole body of street-children was depicted as a criminal threat through the synonymy that emerged between the labels 'street-child' and 'criminal'. Similarly, this research contributes to the debate on the middle-class construction of childhood, as the movement's adoption of language that heightened the street-child's

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[16] Linda Mahood and Barbara Littlewood, 'The "vicious" girl and the "street-corner" boy: sexuality and the gendered delinquent in the Scottish child-saving movement 1850-1940', *Journal of the history of sexuality* 4:4 (April 1994) pp.549-578, p.552. Mahood and Littlewood have taken this term from Etienne Balibar, "Class racism", *Race, nation, class: Ambiguous identities* (London 1991).

[17] H.W. Schupf, 'Education for the neglected: Ragged schools in nineteenth-century England', *History of Education Quarterly* 12:2 (Summer 1972) pp.162-183.

[18] H. Cunningham, *The children of the poor: Representations of childhood since the seventeenth century* (Oxford 1991).

[19] L.M. Jackson, *Child sexual abuse in Victorian England* (London 2000), p.1.

[20] J.M. Feheney, 'Delinquency among Irish Catholic children in Victorian London', *Irish Historical Studies* 23:92 (November 1983) pp.319-329.

disparity or attempted to fit them into a middle-class mould is analysed. Davin has briefly touched on the difference between the middle-class idea of childhood and the lives of street-children. She has argued that the increasing knowledge of street-children had a shocking impact on middle-class sensibilities. This is likewise touched upon by Mahood and Littlewood, who have stressed the sheer irreconcilability of the two childhood experiences. In connection with the middle-class' presentation of poor children, Cunningham,[21] Gilfoyle,[22] and Louise Jackson[23] have uniformly commented on the paradoxical depiction of the street-child as simultaneously pitiful and dangerous. This research provides a significant contribution to knowledge on this topic, as it dissects the contrasting imagery used to refer to street-children by one clearly defined institution, rather than looking at this idea across the whole of Victorian society.

Materials and Method

This research explores the portrayal of impoverished children between 1844 and 1864 in material produced in association with the Ragged School Union (RSU). This time period has been chosen as it encompasses the formation of the RSU in 1844 and the peak period of ragged school growth, which then began to decline following the Education Act of 1870. On a more practical level, this time period limits the vast number of sources available.

The majority of sources being drawn upon originate from the RSU based in London, however texts originating from influential leaders in other areas of Britain will also be used. Two articles by Mary Carpenter, a Bristol-based *'national authority on children in need'*,[24] have been incorporated into this analysis, as Carpenter's writing had considerable influence on the ragged school movement. Similarly, two articles composed by Thomas Guthrie, the founder of the Scottish RSU, will also be used. Despite Guthrie's independence from the London-based RSU, he, like Carpenter, had a guiding influence on the institution, a fact that has been immortalised by a statue in his memory in central Edinburgh, on which it is inscribed that he was *'by tongue and pen, the apostle of the* [ragged school] *movement elsewhere'*.

During this thesis the language used to describe street-children in RSU articles, poems, speeches, and reports is analysed in order to determine the intended function of the rhetoric. Though these documents are highly valuable in demonstrating how leading figures perceived the children, they are perhaps more helpful in revealing how they wanted the children to be perceived by their

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[21] Cunningham, *The children of the poor*, p.106.
[22] Gilfoyle, 'Street-rats and gutter-snipes', p.855.
[23] Jackson, *Child sexual abuse in Victorian England*, p.7.
[24] J. Manton, *Mary Carpenter and the children of the streets* (London 1976), p.13.

audience. In total 24 documents directly produced by the RSU,[25] and 31 newspapers reports of RSU meetings have been involved in the original research of this thesis. With regard to the newspaper reports of RSU meetings, the specific purpose and origin of these texts should be acknowledged. These reports present a summary of RSU meetings, and as a result information is inevitably given selectively, according to what is deemed most interesting to the general public. Moreover, the primary aim of the meetings was to assess the progress of the ragged schools, rather than to rally support from the public. Consequently, the emphasis in the reports is different from the articles produced directly by the RSU, which were composed to educate the public and win support for the cause.

	Newspaper/Material	Number of texts used	
Newspaper reports of RSU meetings	*The Times*	15	31
	Daily News	13	
	The Morning Post	2	
	The Observer	1	
Material produced directly by the RSU	Articles from *The Ragged School Magazine*	15	24
	Articles/books by assorted leaders of the ragged school movement`	9	

This table provides further details of the various documents used during this research

In addition to written sources, cartoons and sketches are used to demonstrate the wider portrayal of street-children. The majority of these images do not originate from the RSU due to limitations in sources, though there are some with direct references to the ragged schools. Though this research is primarily based on written sources and has not entailed an extensive study of images, the pictures used within this thesis helpfully represent the discourse being analysed and the existing middle-class presumptions about street-children. Images from the middle-class publication *Punch* are used at several points, as well as images from artists particularly interested in communicating the problem of child poverty. Gustav Doré's images from *London: A pilgrimage*, as well as paintings from the London-based artist Augustus Mulready, have proved valuable in communicating how the children were depicted.

When analysing the ragged school texts, frame analysis has been used to deconstruct how the children were portrayed. Schrover has described frames as *'a series of claims and themes, strung together so as to tell a consistent story* [and to] *support an argument without constituting it'.*[26] The utilisation of frames is closely linked to the problematisation of an issue, as frames act as a channel through which the original topic becomes associated with wider problems. It is necessary to recognise the shortcomings of frame analysis in this context. The variety in authorship of the different texts presents a challenge, as it is impossible to conclude whether the popularity of frame usage fluctuates due to personal preference, or because of other influences. It is also problematic to show how the

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[25] The 24 documents produced directly by the RSU vary in length from short poems, to books of 250 pages.
[26] M. Schrover, 'Family in Dutch migration policy', *History of the Family* 14:2 (2009) pp.191-202, p.6.

frames used changed over time, as the number of texts per year is not uniform over the period studied due to limitations in the sources available. Nevertheless, frame analysis allows recurring imagery to be quantified more easily, making it possible for broad trends to be readily identified.

As Schrover has highlighted, previous research on the use of frames has noted the recurring use of economic, humanitarian, endangering, and cultural frames in reports concerning migration.[27] In her article on the media's reporting of the Bertha Hertogh story, Schrover has noted four frames specific to the story, including the *'abnormality frame'* and the *'Cold war frame'*.[28] Correspondingly, this research has identified six frames that persistently re-emerge during ragged school texts to bolster the arguments used or sensationalise the topic; these six frames are described below. Following this, the next section provides the results of the frame analysis carried out during this research.

The animal frame: The animal frame was employed in ragged school texts to stress the deviance of the children from the norm, as it helped to formulate the image of the street-child as an outcast from wider society. The use of the animalistic terminology encouraged a sensational picture of the street-children via terminology such as *'beast'*, *'prowling'*, and *'predators'*. However, the animal frame also appeared in more pathetic imagery, such as descriptions of the children as ragged *'creatures'*, searching like *'sheep'* for food, which fosters sympathy for the children. This more pitiful expression of the animal frame echoed the values of the animal rights movement that was steadfastly growing during this period; this *double entendre* of the animal frame is assessed during this thesis by analysing the variation in animalistic imagery used, and the context in which it was employed.

The mowgli frame: Like the animal frame, the mowgli frame emphasised the difference of the children from civilised society. For the purpose of this research, language which asserted the children's otherness through racial imagery, such as the popular label *'street Arabs'*, or the use of the word *'savages'*, has been classed as part of the mowgli frame. In addition to racial terms in descriptions, the mowgli frame is also seen in the direct comparison of street-children with the inhabitants of 'uncivilised' nations. Less directly, this frame is also seen in descriptions of the street-child's distinct appearance, which segregates the children from the rest of society. Undoubtedly, the use of racial language was influenced by the wider contextual setting of the work of missionaries in 'savage' countries. This rhetoric may have aimed to induce guilt in the reader who was supporting missions work overseas, while neglecting British street-children, which is a function that will be explored during the analysis of this frame.

The innocence frame: Within this frame the street-children were depicted in accordance with the Victorian concept of childhood, as their natural innocence and 'child-likeness' was emphasised. The significance of 'childhood', and the street-children's deprivation of it, invoked sympathy from the public, and helped the middle-class audience to identify with the children. The innocence frame is visible in descriptions of the children that fit with wider middle-class perceptions of childhood, such

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[27] Schrover, 'Problematisation and particularisation', p.6.
[28] Schrover, 'Problematisation and particularisation', p.6.

as descriptions that detailed the children's rosy cheeks or angelic faces. The use of the innocence frame appears irreconcilable with the use of othering terminology that asserted the distance between the middle-class and the impoverished children, yet these two ways of depicting the children were able to co-exist. Despite the prominence of alienating language that stressed otherness, possessive pronouns were a common feature of reports, as seen in Carpenter's, question *'What shall we do with our pauper children?'*.[29] This frame emotionalised and claimed the pauper problem as 'ours', begging the audience to bring the poor children into the folds of society.

The fatalism frame: The fatalism frame includes descriptions which focused on the inevitability of the corruption of children by their environment, provoking feelings of hopelessness and calling for drastic action from the public. The prominence of this environmentalist thought is seen in *The philosophy of ragged schools*, which argued *'The mind of the child must receive its bent from the circumstances by which he is surrounded and the companions among whom he is thrown'*.[30] This frame made intervention from the middle-class a necessity, as otherwise the children would be doomed to become criminals, or to die without knowledge of the Gospel.

The criminal frame: This frame asserted the children's inherent delinquency by describing their intrinsically *'cunning'* nature, disregard for rules, and preference for 'easy gain' through thieving. This frame underlined the need to solve the pauper problem before they become a pest to the community, or, more sinisterly, a threat to society's stability. In association with the fatalism frame, the criminal frame portrayed the street-child as almost interchangeable with the thief, as the *'preponderance of crime among that class'*[31] encouraged the presumption that all street-children were, or would inevitably become, criminals. This frame promoted a threatening image to be associated with the street-children, forging a sense of urgency in the reader that compelled them to support the work of the ragged schools.

The disease frame: The disease frame consists of references to the poor metaphorically being a disease themselves, or being a source of actual disease (e.g. cholera or typhus). The use of pathological words such as *'blight'*, *'breeding'*, *'contaminated'*, and *'virus'* have been classified as instances of the disease frame, as have fear-inducing descriptions of the poor as an infectious threat to the middle-class. As well as the more literal use of the disease frame, the frame was also used in relation to ideas of moral contamination, as the description of the poor as a *'moral gangrene'* appeared frequently. Less sensationally, the use of the word *'remedy'* in relation to the ragged schools similarly implied the need to physically or morally heal the children. The utilisation of disease-related language is likely to have been related to the growing knowledge of pathogens and the widespread concern about disease (as the period studied here coincides with several cholera epidemics in Britain), therefore the threat presented by the poor's hygiene should be understood within this wider context.

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[29] M. Carpenter, 'What shall we do with our pauper children?: a paper read at the Social Science Association, Dublin', *LSE Selected Pamphlets* (August 1861) pp.1-23.
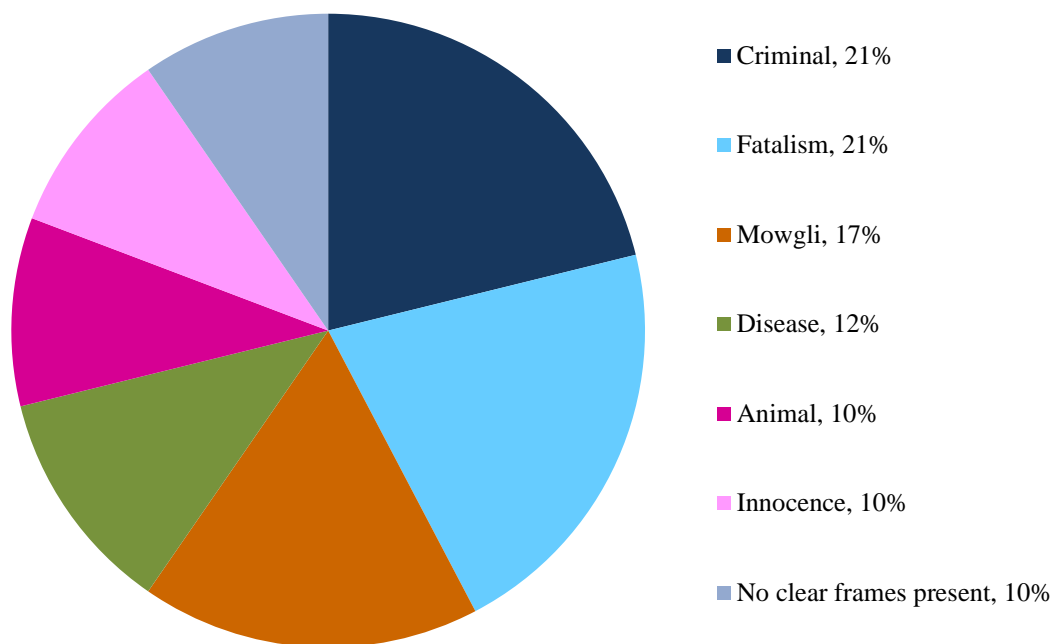[30] C.F. Cornwallis, *The philosophy of ragged schools*, (London 1851), p.115.
[31] 'The ragged schools', *The Times*, 20 May 1847, p.6.

The identification of these six frames will enable re-emerging themes to be recognised in the different texts of the RSU, regardless of variance in authorship and origin. By using frame analysis this research highlights how conflicting descriptions were able to co-exist within the same text, leading to the promotion of the pauper problem within the reader's mind. The varying prominence of these six frames across the ragged school texts is described in the following section.
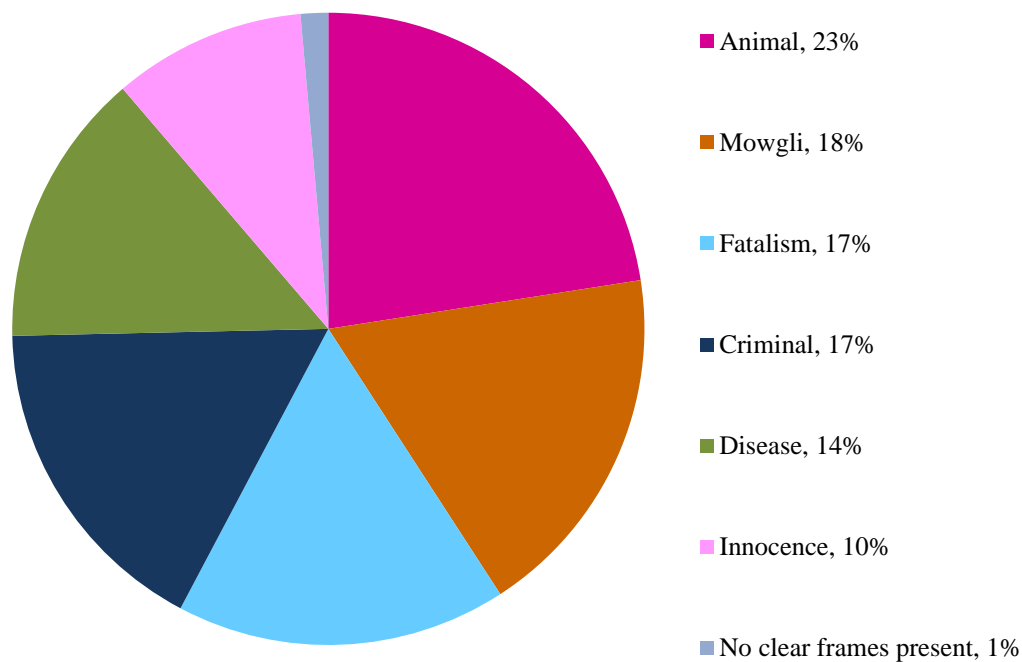
Framing a problem

The frames utilised within ragged school texts differ according to the author and the purpose of the text, although common themes appear across the documents analysed here. The variation in frame popularity within ragged school texts that has been found during this research can be made clearer by showing the findings of the frame analysis through pie charts.

- Criminal, 21%
- Fatalism, 21%
- Mowgli, 17%
- Disease, 12%
- Animal, 10%
- Innocence, 10%
- No clear frames present, 10%

Figure 1. The frequency of frames within the 31 newspapers reports of RSU meetings

Figure 1 has been composed using only the 31 newspaper reports of the RSU meetings. It is self-evident that the fatalism and criminal frames are the largest sections of the chart, each forming just over one-fifth. In second place, the mowgli frame takes up seventeen per-cent of the chart, and following this the disease frame is the third largest, with twelve per-cent. The final three sections (animal, innocence, and no clear frames) all make up one-tenth of the chart, and are therefore the least popular frames in the newspapers.

In acknowledgement of the different origins and purpose of newspaper texts from those directly published by the ragged schools, figure 2 has been formed using the 24 documents composed by the RSU. As has been mentioned already, the newspaper reports present a condensed version of RSU meetings, and consequently some frames that were present may have been edited out. Additionally, the RSU meetings focused on reporting the accomplishments of the movement, rather than informing the public of the need. Logically, the frames used to problematise the pauper problem are less dominant in newspaper reports than in the RSU documents, whose sole function was to obtain sympathy and support from the public.

- Animal, 23%
- Mowgli, 18%
- Fatalism, 17%
- Criminal, 17%
- Disease, 14%
- Innocence, 10%
- No clear frames present, 1%

Figure 2. The frequency of frames in the 24 texts produced directly by the RSU

It can be seen that the two charts present significant differences. Figure 2 places the animal frame as the most common, appearing in 23 per-cent of the documents, whereas in the first chart it was among the three least common. The most prevalent frames in figure 1 are the fatalism and criminal frames, yet when newspaper reports are excluded from the analysis, these two frames fall into third place, though again both having equal value. Nevertheless, broad likenesses remain, for example the mowgli frame remains a similar value and ranking in popularity, as it is again the second most popular frame. As well as this, the innocent frame remains consistent in the two sets of data, as it again makes up one-tenth of the chart. The detail that most clearly shows the different purpose of the newspaper reports from the RSU texts is the difference in the number of documents which do not contain any clear frames; in figure 1 this section makes up ten per-cent of the chart, however it shrinks to only one per-cent in figure 2. This considerable difference backs up the claim made above, that

texts composed directly by the RSU perform a more educating or awareness-raising function than the texts originating from the newspapers.

By comparing the frames in this way, it is possible to see how their use varied according to the function of the text. Notably, however, this research found that there was no obvious change in frame popularity over time, excluding the prominence of the criminal frame in the years immediately following the 1848 revolutionary upheaval in Europe. This lack of variation across the time period studied here implies all of these frames remained relatively consistent in their importance in the ragged schools' arguments. For this reason, the following chapters focus on the manifestation and function of the frames, rather than on their change over time.

Chapter one: Contextualising the pauper problem

Before analysing the ragged school movement, the context and backdrop that fostered the broader child-saving phenomenon must first be understood. The information below is mainly drawn from the wider historiographical material which has sought to understand the motivations that drove the child-savers. As was mentioned earlier, this study does not intend to attribute a 'greatest cause' to the movement, but to recognise the diversity of influences that acted upon the individuals. With the intention of achieving clarity, this chapter looks at three main incentives that influenced the child-savers, namely humanitarian concern, fear for society, and evangelical passion. Following the documentation of these three motivations, the rise of the ragged schools themselves is described.

Humanitarian concern: Saving the children

The Victorian period witnessed the solidification of the 'ideal childhood' concept, which had become increasingly popular in the late-eighteenth century. Childhood was depicted as a period of innocence and uninhibited play, which adults were to encourage and protect. Prior to this, the play-orientated childhood had been restricted to the privileged few, however with the vast expansion of the middle-class during the industrialisation, this idea of childhood was able to grow in prominence.[32]

The popularity of the heavily romanticised poetry of William Blake and William Wordsworth testifies to the public's increasing identification with the notion of idyllic childhood.[33] In Blake's *'Infant joy'* he envisions a conversation between a newly born child and its mother; *'"I have no name; I am but two days old." What shall I call thee? "I happy am, Joy is my name"'*.[34] Within this poem Blake portrays the newly born child as incarnated happiness and the very embodiment of innocence, a

'Portrait of Florence Anson', by Julia Margaret Cameron, 1866

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[32] The expansion of the middle-class has been described in A.N.Wilson's *The Victorians* (London 2003).
[33] Jackson, *Child sexual abuse in Victorian England*, p.5.
[34] W. Blake, *The selected poems of William Blake* (London 2000).

world away from the concept of original sin that was previously engraved on the middle-class mind.[35] The growing influence of this sickly-sweet idea of childhood is further seen in the photography of the middle-aged and middle-class Julia Margaret Cameron, captured in the 1860s and '70s, which endures as a testimony to the sentimentalised notion that had emerged. The portrait by Cameron shown above depicts the innocent and wistful image of childhood that had developed by the mid-Victorian period.

Yet, within the same period, the desperate conditions of the poor were being revealed to the middle-class through newspaper reports. Henry Mayhew's commentaries published in *The Morning Chronicle* and the London City Mission's reports, exposed the depths of poverty within British cities. During the same era in which Britain celebrated her cultural achievements through the Great Exhibition, unveiled in 1851, it was simultaneously felt by those who witnessed the plight of the poor that *'the misery, ignorance and vice, amidst all the immense wealth and great knowledge of 'the first city in the world'* [is] *to say the very least, a national disgrace to us'.*[36] This vast disparity between the middle-class concept of childhood and the street-child's reality undoubtedly had some influence on the social reformers who felt the need to solve the pauper problem. Cunningham has shown how irreconcilable the two experiences of childhood were to the middle-class through the example of Mayhew's encounter with a young watercress-seller, which he argues illustrates how the middle-class

'Candour', Punch, 27 October 1860. The text reads:
"Well my little man, what do you want!"
"Wot do I want!- Vy, Guv'nor, I think I wants Heverything!"

attempted to fit poor children into their notion of childhood. Mayhew asked the girl *'about her toys and her games with her companions'*,[37] only to be shocked by her response that she didn't have any. In reference to this, Cunningham states *'Rarely do two concepts of childhood at such odds with one*

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[35] Hugh Cunningham and Michael Morpurgo, 'The invention of childhood: The child is father of the man', *BBC Radio 4 Extra* episode 13, 4 May 2012
http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b00sjw36/The_Invention_of_Childhood_The_Child_is_Father_of_the_Man/
[36] H. Mayhew, *London labour and the London poor* (Hertfordshire 2008), p.li.
[37] Cunningham, *The children of the poor*, p.109.

another confront each other so directly'.[38] The above image from *Punch* illustrates the confrontation of these two concepts of childhood, as the ragged, brass boy is contrasted with the well-dressed, meek middle-class girl. The young boy's comical response to the middle-class gentleman that he *'wants Heverything!'* is endearing, as well as expressive of the importance of a particular 'child-like' appearance in society.

As a logical extension of the belief in a 'correct' experience of childhood, it became widely accepted that the street-child's experience of childhood was incorrect. Following on from Cunningham's ideas, Mahood and Littlewood's research on the middle-class response to street-children has noted the fundamental incompatibility of the working-class and the middle-class family model. They have stated that *'The patterns of behaviour that many poor families exhibited often were consonant with their values and with rational survival strategies in a hostile city* […] *What was seen by working-class parents as proper initiative and responsibility- for instance, when a son sold newspapers or a daughter sang outside a bar for pennies- was evidence of irresponsibility and immorality as far as the child-savers were concerned'.*[39] Similarly, the dramatic difference between the two experiences of childhood has been commented on by Davin in relation to the portrayal of waif children, as she has stated that *'Children who fended for themselves, apparently living without family and beyond parental or religious discipline, were a shocking affront to prevailing conventions of protected and innocent childhood'.*[40] Hand in hand with the concept of the 'ideal child' was that of the 'ideal parent', as parent figures were held responsible for providing an adequate home in which to raise moral children. During a speech in 1851, Lord Ashley (an Evangelical Anglican and chairman of the London RSU, who would later become The Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury)[41] asserted the value of the home environment when he said; *'there is no system of improvement or education half so good as that carried on at the domestic fireside* [...] *the greatest benefit arises when the working man returns to his own home, there to spend the evening in moral and religious exercises'.*[42] This idea of the ideal parent has been further commented on by Davin, who has described the recurring depiction of 'bad' parents within waif stories, who lead their children astray and are *'rendered irresponsible by drink,* [and] *usually come to a bad, unhappy and godless end'.*[43]

Evidently, concern for the well-being of impoverished children was a rousing incentive behind the child-saving movement. However, middle-class anxiety was not restricted to the individual child's welfare, but extended to the potential danger that was presented to wider society.

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[38] Cunningham, *The children of the poor*, p.109.
[39] Mahood and Littlewood, 'The "vicious" girl and the "street-corner" boy', p.554.
[40] Davin, 'Waif stories', p.70.
[41] Throughout this case-study he will be referred to as 'Lord Ashley' unless a source is being quoted.
[42] 'Lord Shaftesbury in Manchester', *The Morning Chronicle*, 22 November 1851.
[43] Davin, 'Waif stories', p.79.

Fear for society: The madding crowd

Perhaps the most surprising motivating concern to modern eyes is the threat that the street-children were perceived to pose to social order. The idea of the street-child as a danger to society has strong connections with ideas propagated in nineteenth century biological determinism. Platt has shown the prevalence of Darwinian thought in the American child-savers' ideas about criminality, as he has argued *'from the tenets of social Darwinism, they derived their pessimistic views about the intractability of human nature and the innate moral defects of the working class'*.[44] Further, Platt has commented on the influence of the criminologist Cesare Lombroso's work. Lombroso's theory of criminality argued in favour of *'a criminal type distinguishable from non-criminals by observable physical anomalies of a degenerative or atavistic nature. He proposed that the criminal was a morally inferior human species, characterised by physical traits reminiscent of apes, lower primates, and savage tribes'*.[45] In line with Lombroso's ideas, the child-savers adopted language that emphasised the children's primitiveness and pre-disposition to crime. However, unlike Lombroso's 'nature' founded argument, the child-savers upheld the importance of 'nurture'.

It has already been briefly mentioned that there was considerable weight placed on the importance of the home environment in forming a child's moral compass. On a darker level, there was growing concern about the potentially detrimental influence of a child's surroundings. Despite Platt's acknowledgement of the influence of Lombroso's theory of criminality upon the middle-class, he has simultaneously argued that the child-saving movement was a reaction against this biological fatalism, and an expression of the significance of nurture.[46] Further, this theme of 'moral contamination' has been exposed in Jackson's study of the Victorian response to child abuse, where she has stated that *'If the child was born innocent, the environment led to corruption'*,[47] plainly suggesting the importance of nurture over nature within the Victorian mind. Fatalistic predictions that stressed the inevitability of the children's corruption by their environment promoted a sense of dread about what they may become; those worries most commonly expressed are described below.

The mid-nineteenth century witnessed a growing fear of criminality and juvenile delinquency. This fear was partly encouraged by the sensational revelations of statistics, which testified to an increase in crime, and reported the *'distressing news that, while the population had increased 79% during that period, the crime rate had increased 482%'*.[48] Modern scholars have argued that there was not necessarily a dramatic increase in crime, as the Victorian period also saw a change in middle-class society's moral standard, and a more effective policing system. Despite the possibility that the upsurge in delinquency may have been a perceived rather than an actual change, it evidently

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[44] Platt, 'The rise of the child-saving movement', p.22.
[45] Platt, 'The rise of the child-saving movement', p.23.
[46] Platt, 'The rise of the child-saving movement', p.23.
[47] Jackson, *Child sexual abuse in Victorian England*, p.6.
[48] Jackson, *Child sexual abuse in Victorian England*, p.37.

influenced the middle-class, who sought to prevent the escalation of criminality in society. Cunningham has commented on the widespread fear of what would result from the idleness of street-children,[49] as the presumed absence of a good role-model to teach the values of hard work and prudence led to concerns about how they would provide for themselves without resorting to stealing.

At a more extreme level, street-children were feared to threaten the stability of society, as the not too distant memory of the bloody upheaval in France, and the cataclysmic events across Europe in 1848, or the 'year of revolutions', testified to the fragility of the social structure. The growing presence of the Chartists[50] in the 1840s indicated that the threat from socialist ideology was not restricted to the continent, but had begun to take hold in Britain. In line with this, the street-children were perceived to represent not only an annoyance to society, but a distinct threat to social order, as their potential to form a formidable army became a common fear. Trevor Blount's analytical reading of Dickens' *Bleak House* has indicated the real concern regarding the dormant destructive power of the neglected poor that was present in Dickens' middle-class mind. According to Blount, the impoverished crossing-sweeper, Jo, represented *'a threat, if denied help, to the peace and prosperity of the nation as a whole'.*[51] During the research carried out for this thesis, this deep-seated fear has been comparably found in the writing of Carpenter, the influential educational reformer, who argued that the children did not solely threaten specific localities, but *'indirectly the whole State'.*[52]

In the light of this fear of a working-class uprising, historians have accused the child-savers of intending to solidify the class system and exercise middle-class domination. For example, Cunningham has argued in reference to the ragged schools that *'They stood for a voluntary response to what was seen as a problem which, if left unattended, would shake the foundations of the social and political order'.*[53] Further, Platt has proposed that the child-savers were *'instrumental in intimidating and controlling the poor'.*[54] Likewise, the socialist historian E.P. Thompson has argued that the evangelicals who proclaimed the Gospel to the poor aimed to be *'an essentially counterrevolutionary force which was embraced by elements of the working class as they despaired of temporal political solutions to their problems'.*[55] Plainly, the concerns about social order had a considerable influence on the child-saving movement. Yet, especially as this research is focusing on the ragged school movement, the momentous motivating effect of religious enthusiasm cannot be overlooked.

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[49] Cunningham, *The children of the poor*, p.103.
[50] Chartism was the name given to the working-class labour movement, which was striving for political reform in the mid-nineteenth century.
[51] T. Blount, 'Poor Jo, education, and the problem of juvenile delinquency in Dickens' "Bleak house"', *Modern philology* 62:4 (May 1965) pp.325-339, p.332.
[52] M. Carpenter, 'The claims of ragged schools to pecuniary educational aid from the annual parliamentary grant: as an integral part of the educational movement of the country', *LSE Selected Pamphlets* (1859) pp.1-21, p.20.
[53] Cunningham, *The children of the poor*, p.120.
[54] Platt, 'The rise of the child-saving movement', p.33.
[55] D.M. Lewis, *Lighten their darkness*, (Glasgow 2001), p.2.

Evangelical passion: *'For the Lord hears the poor'* (Psalm 69:5)

The child-saving movement cannot be adequately understood without recognising the movement's intention to 'save'. The middle-class' horror following revelations of the poor's shocking living conditions in British cities was described earlier; a core source of this dismay was the religious ignorance that reportedly prevailed within these households. These concerns about the street-children's irreligion motivated the middle-class to Christianise those who would otherwise remain wretched and neglected. The evangelical interpretation of the Christian Gospel emphasised the saving and transforming power (both in the present life and posthumously) unleashed through faith in Christ, and upheld Christianity as the only answer to the pauper problem. This section assesses the motivating impact of evangelical ideas using both the wider historiographical work and findings from this research, which helpfully supplement points that have been previously overlooked by scholars.

Building on the ideas of environmentalism and nurture described above, Platt has mentioned how evangelicalism contributed to the reaction against naturalistic fatalism, saying that the *'pessimism of Darwinism* […] *was counterbalanced by notions of charity, religious optimism, and the dignity of suffering, which were implicit components of the Protestant work ethic'*.[56] The child-savers of an evangelical tendency obtained some of their fervour from the overseas missions that were contemporaneously being applauded by the public. In the same period that saw British missionaries travel to save and civilise the heathens of the South Pacific, the heathens who occupied Whitechapel and Shoreditch also became a focal point of evangelical concern. Cunningham has argued that there was a growing association of the street-child with the savage, because the savage represented *'someone who needed to be rescued, saved, and civilised'*.[57] In connection with this, Mahood and Littlewood have stated that for many child-savers *'savages were perceived to inhabit not only the far regions of the Empire and to some extent the Highlands, but, more alarmingly, the streets and slums of urban Scotland'*.[58]

Those driven by religious passion believed the Gospel to be intertwined with the broader concerns about the children's welfare and fears about criminality, as their interpretation of the Christian faith dictated that *'there was no form of disease, no degree of degradation, no state of poverty, or want, or woe, where Christianity did not find a footing'*.[59] A religious education was upheld as the answer to the pauper problem, as it was felt that a sufficient moral training would impart *'three habits- those of discipline, learning, and industry, not to speak of cleanliness'*;[60] all themes that would eliminate the two other driving concerns that were looked at earlier. Correspondingly, Davin has identified the common theme present across waif stories that *'good Christians are to be pious,*

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[56] Platt, 'The rise of the child-saving movement', p.22.
[57] Cunningham, *The children of the poor*, p.97.
[58] Mahood and Littlewood, 'The "vicious" girl and the "street-corner" boy', p.552.
[59] 'Ragged School Union… no.6, June 1848 Occasional paper', *Hume Tracts* (1848) pp.1-12, p.5.
[60] T. Guthrie, 'A plea for ragged schools, or, prevention better than cure', *Bristol Selected Pamphlets,* (1847) pp.5-48, p.19.

truthful, industrious, and always attentive to the needs of others',[61] again qualities that would counteract the broader worries.

Despite this faith in the power of the Gospel, the poor's filthy dwellings and negative influences from both friends and family were feared to stopper or limit the impact that the Gospel could have. Donald Lewis' analysis of the evangelical movement in London has argued that the London City Mission intended to communicate *'the view that social ills were significant barriers to the progress of the Gospel* […] *the poor were not at heart more immoral than the rich, or more criminal- their temptations were greater and their social conditions much more likely to lead to immorality and crime'.*[62] In a comparable way, Blount has quoted a letter from Dickens about his visit to a ragged school, in which he stated that communicating with the children *'"the idea of God, when their own condition is so desolate, becomes a monstrous task"'.*[63] Both of these extracts again show the strong focus on environmentalism that has been noted already.

In specific reference to the ragged schools, the centrality of evangelical fervour as an incentive is evident, however due to the interrelated nature of the motivations that has been shown it cannot be singled out as the most influential. This analysis has aimed to show the many links between these three factors, which can make their separation a challenging and fruitless task.

Remedying the pauper problem

The above analysis of the key motivating concerns behind the child-savers has highlighted the primal importance of the home environment within the Victorian mind. As the significance attributed to the environment has been shown, the distinctly Victorian idea of paternalism can now be understood. The proposed remedies to the pauper problem grew organically from the idea of the importance of the home, and therefore centred on altering the street-children's situation. Mahood and Littlewood have argued that middle-class environmentalism *'legitimated drastic intervention in order to provide a "better" environment'.*[64] Further, Platt has argued that solutions to the pauper problem were *'based on the assumption that proper training can counteract the impositions of a poor family life, a corrupt environment, and poverty'.*[65] A key part of this process was removing (as far as was possible) the child from the damaging environment, whether this was by providing an alternative to the streets for the children to spend their time during the day, or, in more extreme cases, by seeking to cut the child's ties with their family.

The Victorian paternalistic response to orphaned or neglected children has been explored in

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[61] Davin, 'Waif stories', p.74.
[62] Lewis, *Lighten their darkness*, p.168.
[63] Blount, 'Poor Jo, education, and the problem of juvenile delinquency ', p.333.
[64] Mahood, and Littlewood, 'The "vicious" girl and the "street-corner" boy', p.555.
[65] Platt, 'The rise of the child-saving movement', p.31.

Blount's reading of *Bleak House*, which has shed light on the duty attributed to both society and the state. He has stated that the philosophy presented by Dickens is that *'Suffering that can be alleviated* ought *to be alleviated'.*[66] According to Blount, poor Jo is *'at once the victim of society's apathy, selfishness, and dereliction of duty'*,[67] and consequently he is represented as the responsibility of society; for Dickens, in the case of orphans, *'the parish and society occupy the parental role'.*[68] Beyond this, even in cases of children whose parents were present, wider society nevertheless bore the responsibility to educate and civilise them if this was not being done at home. This idea of the 'state parent' has been commented on by Platt, who has noted the familial structure that was given to reformatories, which intended to reflect *'true homes'.*[69] Intervention within the children's lives to rescue them from negative influences was perceived as the only means of rescuing them *'from the paths of vice, misery, and degradation'.*[70] It was within this atmosphere that schools aiming to educate destitute children appeared in the 1840s across Britain, in the form of ragged and industrial schools. Due to limitations in the historiographical material, a considerable portion of the below analysis is based on the archival research carried out during this investigation, rather than on the work of other scholars.

The children eligible to attend educational institutions aimed at the poor were those not legally classed as 'criminal' children, as those with a criminal background were destined for reformatory establishments. The children targeted were those defined according to Carpenter's popular terminology as the *'"perishing classes"'.*[71] It was believed that the perishing classes required intervention to prevent them from becoming criminals, as *'While not yet criminal or vagrant as far as the law was concerned, it was from their ranks that both of these latter groups largely derived'.*[72] Ragged and industrial schools shared a common core to their ideology, as they both proclaimed the notion that *'prevention is better than cure'* and fundamentally believed in the possibility of improving the street-children. Both institutions strictly admitted only the poorest children, and sought to supply the support and good influence that ought to have been provided in the home, in the hope that the children could shake off the negative influences in their lives. However, despite a shared goal the two movements differed significantly in other ways.

Industrial schools aimed to train street-children in specific industries, such as carpentry or shoe-making for boys, and sewing or cookery for girls. Their fundamental distinction from the ragged schools was their focus on practical training, as the industrial schools' decision to separate education from religious teaching reveals a clear difference in the motivation of the two institutions. Though there was some crossover between the two systems, for example their shared 'target market', they

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[66] Blount, 'Poor Jo, education, and the problem of juvenile delinquency', p.332.
[67] Blount, 'Poor Jo, education and the problem of juvenile delinquency', p.332.
[68] Blount, 'Poor Jo, education and the problem of juvenile delinquency', p.337.
[69] Platt, 'The rise of the child-saving movement', p.31.
[70] 'Proposed industrial school', *The Manchester Guardian*, 30 September 1846, p.4.
[71] Schupf, 'Education for the neglected', p.163.
[72] Schupf, 'Education for the neglected', p.163.

were vitally different. Their intrinsically different methodology and motivation allows this research to clearly separate the two movements, and focus upon the ragged schools, as the ragged schools' clear ideological basis make them a particularly engaging subject when analysing how childhood poverty was problematised.

**Lambeth ragged school in 1846, original source unknown**

Unlike the industrial schools, the ragged schools were founded upon *'missionary zeal and the original goal was not the provision of secular education but the saving of souls'.*[73] The London ragged schools were under the leadership of the RSU, which, as has been mentioned, was chaired by Lord Ashley. The schools placed a premium on moral and religious education, though basic skills were also taught; the children learned to read, write, perform simple mathematics, as well as other skills that the teachers were capable of imparting. The image above of Lambeth ragged school conveys the religious emphasis of the teaching through the placard on the wall that reads *'Thou shalt not steal'.* In addition, the middle-class fear of the children's criminality is portrayed here, as the commandment concerning stealing has been singled out. Those children who conveyed particular intellectual promise *'were encouraged either to transfer to a better class of school or to enter a trade',*[74] and those who were particularly hard-working had the chance of being rewarded with the presentation of a one-way ticket to Australia or Canada, where they could make a new start free from social stigma. Emigration was perceived as an exciting opportunity, yet it was a matter of contention for those who were unsupportive of the movement, as they argued that wretched children were being provided with rewards that which honest children were not. Despite this, letters from previous pupils who had embarked on life abroad were upheld as evidence of the wondrous transformation performed by the Holy Spirit, through the medium of the ragged schools. This image of Lambeth ragged school also hints at the transformation of the children, as even though the children have a slightly untidy

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[73] Schupf, 'Education for the neglected', p.163.
[74] Schupf, 'Education for the neglected', p.165.

appearance, they look both subdued and civilised, as indicated by their attentive postures and the fact that they are wearing undamaged shirts and shoes.

The schools were initially run by volunteers, however as their financial support increased, they were able to employ the especially gifted teachers. In 1848 there were 80 paid teachers in London,[75] yet by the 1864 annual meeting this number had risen to 363.[76] Determining the precise number of schools and pupils has been problematic, as the sources are not always explicit about the area the data represents. For example, the below data from a RSU meeting stated that in 1856 there were 150 school buildings, whereas a meeting a year earlier quoted the number of schools to be 300

The number of ragged school buildings

The number of pupils
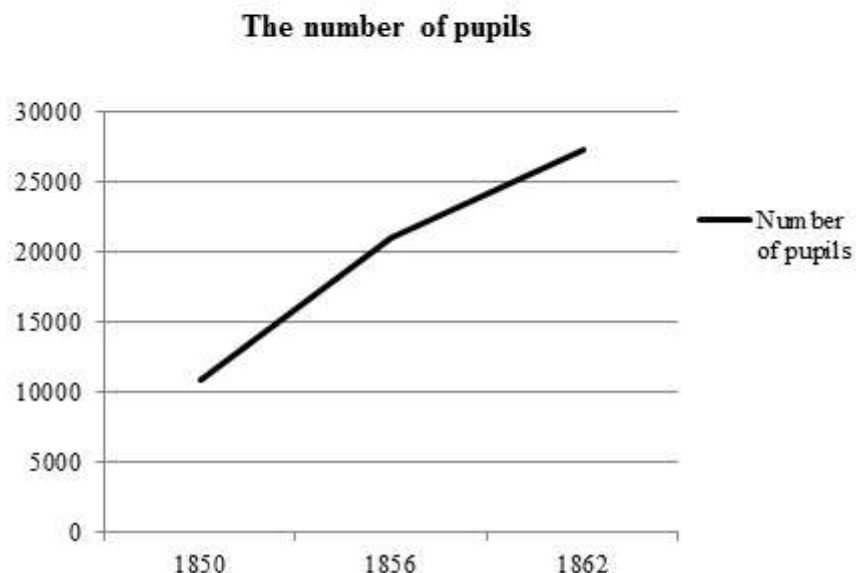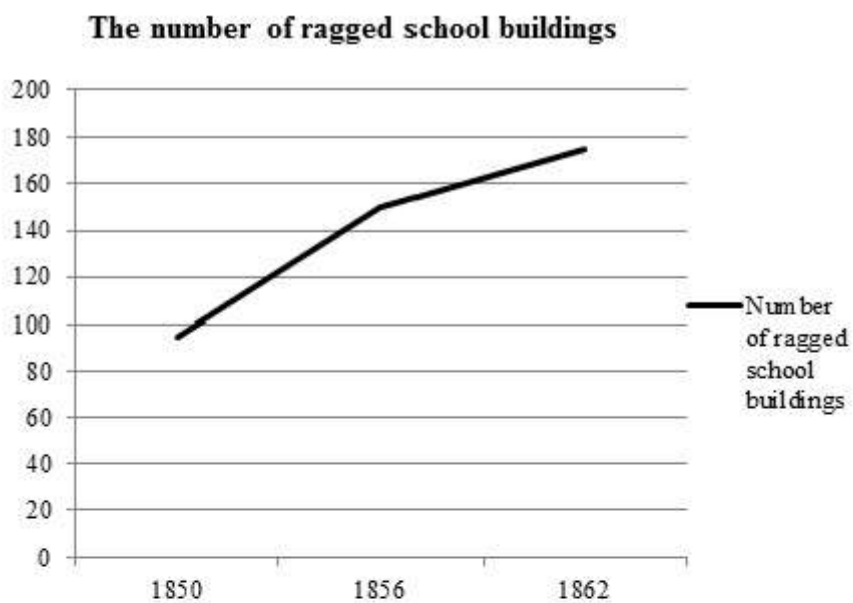
The graphs above were composed using data referring to the progress of the ragged schools in London. This information was cited in the 1862 RSU annual meeting, published in *The Times* on 14 May 1862

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[75] 'Ragged School Union', *The Observer*, 25 July 1848.
[76] 'Ragged School Union', *Daily News*, 10 May 1864.

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'in the metropolis'.[77] It is possible that this second figure includes industrial schools as well as ragged schools; however the source does not clarify this. Due to this discrepancy in data, the above graphs have been formed using figures stated in the newspaper report of a RSU meeting featured in *The Times* in 1862, which explicitly indicated that that the data related to ragged schools within the London area. The graphs show the dramatic growth in both buildings and pupils between 1850 and 1862. However, the ragged schools began to decline following the Education Act of 1870, which resulted in the establishment of publicly supported schools where the poorest children could attend with their fees paid by local boards.

Appeals for financial support were a continual necessity, due to the RSU's enduring insistence on independence from the government in order to protect their ideological freedom. As a result, persuasive and emotive language was an integral part of the RSU's communication with the public, making it a fascinating example of the problematisation of child poverty. To begin this analysis of the ragged schools, the following chapter analyses how the movement presented the street-children as a threat to British society.

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[77] 'Ragged School Union', *The Morning Post*, 8 May 1855, p.3.

Chapter two: The threat- *'Something rotten in our state'*

Building on the theoretical framework mentioned earlier, this chapter analyses how the street-child was painted as a threat in the literature of the ragged schools, and shows how this aided the problematisation of child poverty. With direct reference to the construction of the threat, Cohen's research has assessed how threatening language is used in the media, and he has shown how a particular *'condition, episode, person or group of persons* [can be] *defined as a threat to societal values and interests'*.[78] More specifically, Cohen's theory of symbolization is helpful during this chapter as the conversion of the street-child into a threatening character is documented. It was seen previously that situations can be problematised by the *'tactical linkage of issues'*.[79] Leading on from this, this chapter demonstrates how the RSU associated the street-children with bigger, more menacing issues in order to convey urgency to their middle-class audience.

The various motivating fears and concerns that led to the development of the wider child-saving movement were explored in the previous chapter. Yet, in order to gain sufficient support for the ragged schools it was essential for the urgency of the movement to be communicated to the public. For this purpose, the street-child was converted into an intimidating and foreboding figure that necessitated a remedy. Only when the threat posed by the average street-child had been internalised by the public, could the fundamental importance of the ragged schools be felt. It can be seen that by fostering the notion of the child as a threat, the ragged schools were able to mobilise their audience to give of both their time and finances in support of the RSU's battle against *'the invasions of ignorance, squalor, and crime'*.[80] In addition to investigating how the ragged schools depicted the street-child as a threat, this chapter reveals how the street-child threat was expanded to cover not only certain localities, but the nation as a whole.

With the intention of understanding the construction of the child-threat, this chapter assesses the three most prominent frames used to create an intimidating image in ragged school texts, namely; the disease, the criminal, and the fatalism frames. Both the mowgli and the animal frames could have been incorporated into this chapter, however due to their particularly prominent role in emphasising otherness, the following chapter is devoted to their examination. In order to understand how a menacing picture was composed the ragged school rhetoric with disease or criminal undertones is analysed in the hope of narrating how the pauper problem was converted into a threatening issue. This chapter shows that the potent fatalism frame was interlaced with the disease and criminal frames, though particularly the latter, as fatalistic terminology continually re-emerges during this analysis. To

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[78] Cohen, *Folk devils*, p.9.
[79] Cohen, *Folk devils*, p.5.
[80] M. Carpenter, as quoted in 'Reformatory schools for the children of the perishing and dangerous classes, and for juvenile offenders', *The North American Review* 79:165 (October 1856) pp.406-423, p.408.

begin, the threatening use of the disease frame is analysed, and following this the employment of the criminal frame is assessed.

'A plague on both your houses'

The frame analysis carried out earlier revealed that the disease frame was only slightly more popular in the RSU texts than in the newspaper reports.[81] Though this frame was not the most prominent in either of the two categories, it remained a relatively consistent value in both sets of data. The consistency of this frame shows that it was a standard form of rhetoric in the problematisation of child poverty, and it is therefore important to understand its function. This section studies the various ways disease imagery was used to create the idea of a threat. With the intention of thoroughly exploring the use of disease imagery, this section begins by assessing the physical threat the children apparently posed, after which the moral threat the children presented is considered.

The disease frame was a powerful product of the Victorian period, which emerged from concerns about the infectious diseases that plagued British society. The development of the pauper problem coincided with the cholera epidemics that struck the nation in the mid-nineteenth century; the wave that lasted from 1853 to 1854 took the lives of 26,000 across Britain, with 10,000 of the victims residing in London.[82] Furthermore, this period also saw the devastating potato famine in Ireland, which resulted in the *'eternally shaming statistic of 1.1 million deaths by starvation in Ireland between 1845 and 1850'*.[83] As a consequence of the terrible grief and social upheaval that disease had recently caused (and was still causing) the use of disease imagery was highly provocative and powerful. The regular incorporation of words such as *'contaminated'*, *'infected'*, *'pestilential'*¸ and *'fever'* all aided in creating a fearful and urgent problem, that needed to be 'remedied'. Beyond this subtle use of words, the disease frame also explicitly stressed the actual infectious threat that the poor represented.

The previous chapter mentioned the disturbing effect that social commentaries describing the suffering of the poor had on the comfortable middle-class. In the context of the ragged schools, it is apparent in their material that they intended to shock the readers through their explicit description of the poor's squalid living conditions. The poor's homes were remarked upon in George Hall's article, *'Sought and saved'*, which was published in 1855 and upheld by the RSU as an accurate representation of the movement. Hall stated that the street-children lived *'amid filth and vermin in damp cellars, up filthy courts, or in close, unventilated garrets'*.[84] He went on to directly link the

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[81] See pp.10-11.
[82] Wilson, *The Victorians*, p.36.
[83] Wilson, *The Victorians*, p.81.
[84] G.J. Hall, *Sought and saved: A prize essay on the ragged schools and kindred institutions*, (London 1855), p.3.

poor's uncleanliness with infectious disease, as he described their localities as *'thickly planted preserves of sin and Satan, where pestilent drains and stagnant pools are ever exhaling fever, cholera, and death'*,[85] writing this only a year after the major cholera epidemic mentioned above. An article within *The Ragged School Magazine* in 1864 also clearly associated the poor with cholera, as within a description of an impoverished locality the author noted *'I am not surprised to find that fever is there often prevalent, and cholera occasionally visits it'*.[86] A particularly extreme description of living conditions was related in a newspaper report of a RSU meeting in 1846. During the meeting a Reverend James Kelly told how he had visited a poor parishioner, only to find *'three corpses lying in the same room with her'*. The report then ominously added *'This happened but a few streets away from the room in which they were now assembled'*,[87] which exemplifies the threatening undertone that was built into descriptions of poor areas, as the poor's uncleanliness was depicted as having the potential to affect the rest of society. Evidently, this focus on the poor's association with disease was a recurring feature in ragged school discourse across the period being analysed here, as the extracts above span the majority of the time period being covered. In addition, the prominence of this terminology in both newspaper reports and RSU documents has been shown, as both categories of information have been referred to.

Disease imagery was not limited solely to the danger of physical infection, but also extended to the threat of moral infection. In chapter one, the growing influence of environmentalist thought was

'Rent-day- The cellar and the model-lodging house', *Punch's almanac* **for 1850, p.xviii**

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[85] Hall, *Sought and saved*, p.4.
[86] 'Local conference meetings', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.185.
[87] 'The ragged schools', *Daily News*, 21 February 1846.

noted, and it was seen that there was real concern about the possible effect the home environment had on the poor's morality. Ragged school texts regularly communicated the close relationship between the environment and morality, as cleanliness was upheld as being *'next to godliness'*. The moral implications of hygiene are seen in the Bishop of Norwich's comical assertion during a RSU meeting in 1847 that *'Even if the ragged schools did nothing else, they would secure cleanliness, which was a great point, for he made bold to say it as his experience that he had never known a very wicked man with a very clean face'*.[88] Likewise, five years later *The Ragged School Magazine* published an article of praise entitled *'The clean boy with only one shirt'*, which told the story of a young boy who strove to keep his only shirt clean, and he is quoted as saying *'"Empty belly, or no empty belly, I likes to be clean, and can't abear to be dirty"'*.[89] Nevertheless, the clean street-child was very clearly the minority, hence the special report made on *'The clean boy with only one shirt'*. The significance given to this report again conveys the strong link between morality and cleanliness that had developed. The negative consequence of bad conditions upon morality was described by Guthrie in 1852, who emphasised the danger of a street-child being *'exposed to the pestilential influences of their homes, and haunts'*,[90] and is also implied by Hall, who wrote of a poor district *'where ignorance and godlessness, dirt and destitution, fester together, and aggravate each other's horrors'*.[91]

The images above were published alongside each other in *Punch*, and they effectively demonstrate the connection between uncleanliness and morality. The pictures contrast the cellar-living experience of pauper families, with the 'ideal' home that model-lodging houses intended to provide. The top image shows the negative effect of the poor's environment on their health through the condition of the ragged occupants, who have an emphatically hunched posture. The skeletal old lady towards the back of the scene especially accentuates the poor's ill health, as her facial features are skull-like. The primitive nature of the inhabitants is emphasised by the presence of a donkey, rats, a chicken, and bones on the floor. Further, their vicious nature is shown in the aggressive expressions of the two men behind the door, and the blunt weapon that is being clutched, ready to use on the unwelcome guests. The negative morality caused by cramped dwellings is hinted at by the old lady smoking (a distinctly unfeminine past-time), and the presence of a woman in the bottom-right corner displaying considerable cleavage. At the door, the rent-collector's presence is foreboding, with his dark silhouette and tall top hat, and the anxiety of the inhabitants further contributes to the ominous feeling. On the other hand, the rent collector in the model-lodging house is shown as a jolly and welcome character. The home is light and clean, and the inhabitants are well clothed and well nourished; the very opposite to the dwelling of the destitute.

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[88] 'The ragged schools', *The Times*, 20 May 1847, p.6.
[89] 'The clean boy with only one shirt', a report originally published in *The Ragged School Magazine*, and re-published in *The Huddersfield Chronicle and West Yorkshire Advertiser*, 22 November 1851, p.3.
[90] T. Guthrie, 'Memorial on the claim of ragged industrial schools to government support, presented… to the Most Honourable the Marquis of Lansdowne, and prepared by Thomas Guthrie', *LSE Selected Pamphlets* (1852) pp.3-13, p.5.
[91] Hall, *Sought and saved*, p.3.

It has been shown that poor living conditions threatened to cause the moral contamination of the inhabitants, however it was not only those directly living in squalor that were at risk. While describing the ragged schools in 1859, Carpenter spoke of the infectious nature of bad morality, as she wrote of the importance of educating immoral children separately from others, because the bad children *'would otherwise have annoyed and contaminated their regular scholars'.*[92] More sensationally, the disease frame also crossed class boundaries in society, as it threatened to enter into middle-class homes. Using Cohen's idea of symbolization, it is evident that the term 'street-child' came to be indicative of an infectious threat, as the children themselves became representative of disease. For Carpenter, the street-children signified *'"Something rotten in our state," which poisons its very core'.*[93] In an equally dramatic style, in C.F. Cornwallis' book, which intended to provide a detailed analysis of the ragged schools, the children were labelled as a *'seething corruption'* in the country, and a *'moral fever* [which will] *leave ugly spots and scars on the face of society'.*[94] Furthermore, the need for intervention to halt the moral threat was asserted, as Cornwallis wrote of the need to *'arrest the progress of this moral pestilence whose magnitude has hitherto prevented the attempt'.*[95]Again, this urgency is seen in Guthrie's writing, for example in his morbid proclamation that *'We have not here the miserable consolation that the infected will die off. They are mixed with society, -each an active centre of corruption* […] *The leaven is every day leavening more and more the lump: parents are begetting and breeding up children in their own image'.*[96] This extract from Guthrie simultaneously invokes the fatalism frame, as it pronounces the inevitability of the problem worsening if nothing is done. In this instance, the use of the fatalism frame alongside the disease frame makes intervention a necessity, as the only alternative presented is the gradual degeneration of society.

In the light of the recent trauma caused by disease, this rhetoric clearly communicated the need to solve the pauper problem. The disease frame acted as a powerful mechanism by which to draw attention to a problem that was in need of a solution, as the extensive nature of a threat that obeyed no social boundaries was conveyed. This section has shown that the use of disease imagery was unmistakeably a case of the *'tactical linkage'*[97] of problems, as the street-children came to be associated with a much bigger problem. Moving on from this, the following section considers how the criminal frame was similarly used to build upon the pauper problem in a way that again emphasised the menace that the children represented.

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[92] Carpenter, 'The claims of the ragged schools', p.19.
[93] Carpenter, 'The claims of the ragged schools', p.17.
[94] Cornwallis, *The philosophy of the ragged schools*, p.34.
[95] Cornwallis, *The philosophy of the ragged schools*, p.10.
[96] Guthrie, 'A plea for ragged schools', p.16.
[97] Cohen, *Folk devils*, p.5.

The sins of the father, or, Like father, like son

The close association of the street-child with crime abounds across ragged school documents. However, the criminal frame is less clear-cut than the disease frame, as the terminology is not as distinctive as the pathological language seen above. For the most part, the criminal frame is manifested in the assertion of the intrinsically criminal nature of the children. It was shown during the frame analysis that the criminal frame appeared in just over a fifth of the reports within newspapers, and just below a fifth of the documents produced directly by the RSU.[98] In addition, figure 1 showed that the fatalism frame was tied with the criminal frame as the most popular frame in the newspaper reports. The close association of the fatalism frame with the criminal frame is seen in the fact that in just under three-quarters of the documents where the fatalism frame is utilised, it appears alongside the criminal frame. The compilation of the fatalism and criminal frames created 'doom' rhetoric, which powerfully communicated the child's criminal threat. The compounding of these two frames is particularly popular in Guthrie's writing, which is referred to regularly during this section.

The fear of juvenile delinquency and social upheaval that influenced the child-saving movement has already been briefly looked at, and it has been mentioned that both Platt and Gilfoyle upheld this fear as a primary influence on the American child-savers. Like the disease frame, the criminal frame grew out of contemporary anxieties that were present in society, making it immediately provocative and emotive for the reading audience. It has been shown that the middle-class feared the possible impact of the child's environment upon their morality; this is a theme that is especially relevant in connection with the criminal frame, as the inevitability of the child becoming criminal was argued on the basis of the child's surrounding influences. This section utilises Cohen's theory of symbolization, as it shows that, like with the disease frame, the criminal frame resulted in the street-child becoming interchangeable with the delinquent. To begin, the street-child's supposed connection with crime is looked at, after which the way that the street-child became synonymous with the criminal is analysed. Finally, the ragged schools' expansion of the street-child's criminal threat to cover the whole of British society is explored.

The notion of the 'ideal parent', and the concern regarding the inadequate parenting street-children were receiving was referred to in chapter one.[99] Leading on from this, the ragged schools asserted that the influence of wretched parents would result in the ruin of their children if there was no intervention, an argument relying heavily on both the criminal and fatalism frames. Exemplifying this argument, Hall stated that street-children were *'battling hard for respectability and virtue against fearful odds; parents without natural affection, and children without filial respect'*.[100] This fatalistic attitude is similarly seen in a report of a RSU meeting featured in *The Times*, which described the

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[98] See pp.10-11.
[99] See p.15.
[100] Hall, *Sought and saved*, p.4.

children as *'born in misery and bred in crime'.*[101] The danger presented by the parental example was also underlined by Guthrie, who darkly wrote that the Governor of Edinburgh jail had *'found in the abandoned, or the neglected offspring of dissolute and wretched parents, the criminal in the bud'.*[102] The continuity of this phrase in both newspapers and RSU articles is seen in the fact that it is used almost word for word five years later in a newspaper report of a RSU meeting in 1857, at which it was proclaimed that the schools intended to *'check crime in the bud'.*[103] Correspondingly, the negative influence of parents was also commented upon by Cornwallis, who wrote *'Vice, like war feeds itself: for from the vices of the parents spring up a race of wretched children* […] *trained to wickedness, who in their turn swell the ranks of these so-called dangerous classes'.*[104] This apparent connection between street-children and their parents served to resignedly emphasise the criminal threat that the children were bound to embody.

Beyond the influence of parents, there was also fear of the potentiality of bad role models, who may pass on their 'wisdom', and introduce previously innocent children into criminal circles. *Oliver Twist's* Fagin endures as a prime example of the middle-class fear of predatory villains who sought to corrupt street-children. The anxiety relating to predatory individuals is often seen in cartoons that illustrate the delinquency of street-children, as they sometimes portray a 'guiding' figure in the background. The sketch below was published in *Punch*, and it shows a crowd of crossing-sweeper street-children swarming around a middle-class gentleman, who appears affronted and perhaps also intimidated. The children are harassing him in the hope that he will give them spare change, however they are presenting a considerable threat by forming an obstruction in the road, and have forced a horse-drawn carriage to quickly halt. Notably, to the right of the image an elderly lady is looking-on while holding a broom herself, indicating that she is overseeing the actions of the children, and has perhaps persuaded the children to pester the gentleman for money.

'The crossing-sweeper nuisance', *Punch*, **26 January 1856, p.34.**

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[101] 'The ragged schools', *The Times*, 20 May 1847, p.6.
[102] Guthrie, 'Memorial on the claim of ragged industrial schools', p.8.
[103] 'Ragged School Union', *Daily News*, 26 February 1857.
[104] Cornwallis, *The philosophy of ragged schools*, p.27.

Above the influence of parents and other individuals, the sheer inevitability of the children becoming criminals was argued by the ragged school movement. The children were argued to be inherently unruly, a characteristic included within Cornwallis' description of the ragged school on *'B-street'*, at which there was initially *'open rebellion'*, culminating in *'blood flowing from one of the boys'*.[105] Criminality was portrayed as a preordained consequence of an impoverished life, or, in Guthrie's words; *'the circumstances of these children stand to crime in the relation of cause to effect'*.[106] In a different article, Guthrie comparably stated that *'These neglected children* […] *must grow up into criminals,- the pest, the shame, the burden, the punishment of society'*.[107] This fatalism is also strongly evident in a report in the *Daily News* of a RSU meeting in 1862, which stated that the children would *'naturally and necessarily, to a great degree, grow up to be pests to society'*.[108] The likelihood of the children stealing was further implied in the fear-inducing assertion that *'every gentleman who possessed property that was subject to plunder had a direct interest'*.[109] In a comparable way, a report of a meeting published in *The Times* five years previously declared that with *'Destitution staring them in the face, those boys were naturally impelled to commit crime* […] *was it not natural that they would resort to crime rather than submit to it? (Hear, hear.)'*.[110] Even more dramatically, an account of a meeting in 1849 featured the prediction that the street-children would become *'the victims of the hangman and the inmates of the gaol'*.[111] The sources used here to exemplify the notion of the children's inevitable descent into criminality cover the greater part of the period being analysed, and are taken from both texts directly produced by the RSU and newspaper accounts of meetings. Consequently it is once more possible to see consistency in the information related in RSU articles and newspaper reports, as well as the endurance of ideas over time.

This 'cause and effect' mentality resulted in the street-child becoming almost synonymous with the criminal, an association seen clearly in Carpenter's question *'What, then, are we to do with our pauper children? What did we do for our criminal children?'*.[112] Furthermore, the two are implied to be the same in the bill proposed by Lord Ashley as chairman of the RSU in 1853, which *'provided for the arrest and compulsory education in a workhouse of all children engaged in selling in the streets, sweeping crossings and other desultory employment'*.[113] This close connection between the street-child and the delinquent again reflects Cohen's theory of symbolization,[114] as the word 'street-child' came to carry connotations of criminality. Clearly, just as the street-child became linked with

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[105] Cornwallis, *The philosophy of ragged schools*, p.51.
[106] Guthrie, 'Memorial on the claim of ragged industrial schools', p.4.
[107] Guthrie, 'A plea for ragged schools', p.15.
[108] 'Ragged school union', *Daily News*, 26 February 1862.
[109] 'Ragged school union', *Daily News*, 26 February 1862.
[110] 'Ragged school union', *The Times*, 20 February 1857, p.10.
[111] 'Ragged school union', *The Times*, 16 May 1849, p.5.
[112] Carpenter, 'What shall we do with our pauper children?', p.6.
[113] Feheney, 'Delinquency among Irish Catholic children', p.326.
[114] See p.2.

disease, he was also linked with crime. This *'tactical linkage'*[115] aimed to generate greater concern about child poverty among the public, as its association with the wider problems of disease and crime made it directly connected to the public's personal interests. Building on this, the following sections shows how the criminal frame was intensified to threaten the wellbeing of the whole nation.

The children of the revolution

It has been shown that because of their apparent criminal tendencies, the street-children threatened to be *'pests'* to communities. However, the children were not only presented as an annoyance to society, but also a *'formidable danger'*,[116] as they had been *'taught by the worst of all school-masters, the devil'.*[117] In the same way that the disease frame depicted the children as threatening society, the criminal frame culminated in the representation of the children as a menace to national security, as crime was magnified beyond a merely local problem. The ragged schools' leaders argued that the children's delinquency was *'a national and not a local evil. It eats into the vitals of the body politic. Affecting to a tremendous extent all our large cities, and felt also in our small towns'.*[118] In chapter one it was seen that the fear of revolution and the dissolution of the class system was one of the motivating drives behind the child-saving movement; the way that this fear was impressed upon the public through the criminal frame is considered below.

The ragged school texts commonly cited shocking numbers in relation to the street-children to communicate the importance of immediate action, for example a report of a RSU meeting featured in *The Times* in 1849, described the school's success in *'bringing 10,000 of these children under civilising and religious influence'*, and added that *'20,000 more still remained'.*[119] Many of the documents are vague when referring to numbers, conferring the notion that there were swarms of street-children, as seen in this extract from a report of a meeting in 1864, which said *'there never was a time when* [the ragged schools] *were more needed than at the present period, owing to the continual increase that was being made to the population of the metropolis'.*[120] Numbers were likewise used as an ambiguous threatening tool by Carpenter in 1861, when she wrote *'It is of the utmost consequence to the State that these thousands, tens of thousands, or perhaps even millions, of children should be brought up as to become self-supporting members of society'.*[121] A particularly extreme example of urgency is seen in the RSU poem entitled 'The outcast children's cry', in which the children are heard to menacingly cry: *'We are thousands- many thousands; Every day our ranks increase* […]*Train us!*

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[115] Cohen, *Folk devils*, p.5.
[116] Guthrie, 'Memorial on the claim of ragged industrial schools', p.3.
[117] 'Proceedings of a ragged school conference', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.33.
[118] Guthrie, 'Memorial on the claim of ragged industrial schools', p.12.
[119] 'Ragged school union', *The Times*, 16 May 1849, p.5.
[120] 'Ragged school union', *Daily News*, 10 May 1864.
[121] Carpenter, 'What shall we do with our pauper children?', p.3.

Try us! Days slide onward- We can ne'er be young again!'.[122] This use of numbers created an indistinct, yet sizable, threat and a very considerable problem. The repetition of rhetorical style across ragged school material is again visible, as the focus on the volume of street-children is found in both RSU articles and newspaper reports of meetings from across the era being studied.

Leading on from the declaration of the number of street-children, the assertion of their revolutionary potential acted as an urgent war-cry to British citizens to *'obviate the evil which pressed on them from every side'.*[123] In 1851 Cornwallis opened her book on the schools with the observation that *'It is but a short time since we were all startled by the news that almost every throne in Christendom had been shaken or overturned by popular insurrection'.*[124] She then portentously stated that *'This outbreak of popular discontent* [...]*, which frightened all Europe from its propriety, is just now lulled: but is it quieted altogether?'.*[125] The link between revolutionary danger and the street-child is made more explicit in Cornwallis' argument that the continental upheaval stemmed from social injustice; *'revolutions* [...] *have been prepared long before, by a course of neglect or infraction of those great laws whose object is the happiness of all'.*[126] Further than this, the revolutionary danger from the children was plainly argued at a RSU meeting, when the Duke of Argyll threateningly said in reference to the turmoil in Europe *'those who had been to the continent and who were there* [in 1848] *expressed their astonishment and wonder* [at those children] *who haunted the streets of the great cities of Europe in times of revolution. He had heard it said that such a class could not be produced in England; but he (the Duke of Argyll) advised the meeting not to believe such a statement too readily'.*[127] Significantly, the two sources mentioned above as examples of the most explicit assertions of the children's revolutionary potential were both published in the shadow of the 'year of revolutions', both being composed within three years of 1848. At a fundamental level, these extracts show the ragged schools' assertion that revolution could, and would, happen in Britain if the pauper problem was not solved. Evidently, the over-arching concerns about revolution and the displacement of the class-system found a clear expression in the ragged school documents.

The connection between the street-child and revolutionary and criminal activity has been investigated, and it has been demonstrated that the ragged schools attached the wider problems of disease, crime, and revolution to the issue of child poverty. At the beginning of this thesis, it was stated that the foundation of the RSU's campaign was their assertion that they could solve the problems they were describing. Consequently, the following section looks at the solution that the ragged school documents proposed to counter this substantial threat.

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[122] 'The outcast children's cry', a poem published in *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.70. A complete copy of this poem is included in the appendix.
[123] 'The ragged school union', *The Times*, 10 June 1846, p.8.
[124] Cornwallis, *The philosophy of ragged schools*, p.1.
[125] Cornwallis, *The philosophy of ragged schools*, p.2.
[126] Cornwallis, *The philosophy of ragged schools*, p.8.
[127] 'Ragged school union', *The Times*, 16 May 1849, p.5.

The answer

The RSU heralded their movement as the only solution and sole effective 'escape route' to the pauper problem. Essentially, their movement was proclaimed as the only answer that was capable of eliminating *'the evil which pressed on them from every side'*.[128] The great achievements the schools had already obtained in lessening the danger presented by the children was argued by the RSU, for example it was claimed during a meeting that *'It was impossible* […] *to conceive what the state of the metropolis would have been but for the establishment of such an instrumentality'*.[129] In direct relation to the revolutionary threat, a RSU article defending the value of their schools that was published in 1850 stated that the schools had been of fundamental importance during the 1848 Chartist riots, as if the children had not been under the care of the ragged schools, and busy reading Bibles, *'a large majority would have been actively engaged in* [the riot at] *Victoria Park'*.[130] The schools' ability to prevent revolution was professed more clearly still in the minutes of the RSU meeting in 1848 (evidently a noteworthy year), in which it was said that *'Foolish rulers may build a fort upon Highgate, and think to command the metropolis by the brawling cannon or by bands of armed men; but the ragged school is the surest protection of the throne, the surest safeguard of the nation; and a teacher in a ragged school is worth more than a thousand special constables in preserving the peace'*.[131] The ragged school documents plainly hoped to convey that the situation would currently be worse if they had not been active, and thus to emphasise the value of their movement.

The risk that the street-children presented to society facilitated the ragged schools to stress the middle-class readers' duty to either assist the movement, or to begin another initiative. This guilt-laden argument was used by Guthrie who incisively asked *'What provision have you made for these children of crime, misery, and misfortune? Let us go see the remedy which this rich, enlightened, Christian city has provided for such a crying evil'*.[132] Building on this idea of duty, the ragged school texts proclaimed the importance of supporting their movement in a manner that may be adequately described as a form of intimidation. The texts adopted intense language which effectively declared to the reader that they must contribute to the cause *'or else'*. This almost apocalyptic rhetoric screamed for assistance from the public, as it was argued that if the ragged schools fell due to lack of support, the pauper threat would be unleashed upon society. In 1864 *The Ragged School Magazine* stated in reference to the growing masses *'if we do not teach them the devil will. Sleep we may, but Satan never!'*;[133] a statement that provided little leeway for the reader. During the 1859 RSU gathering Lord Ashley sensationally expressed his belief that *'but for the ragged schools, London could not now be*

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[128] 'The ragged school union', *The Times*, 10 June 1846, p.8.
[129] 'Ragged school union', *The Times*, 9 May 1854, p.12.
[130] 'Crime and its causes: a reply to the attacks of the Morning Chronicle on the London ragged schools', *LSE Selected Pamphlets* (1850) pp.2-48, p.29.
[131] 'Ragged School Union …no.6 June, 1848', p.8.
[132] Guthrie, 'A plea for ragged schools', p.10.
[133] 'Extension of the ragged school movement', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.169.

kept in order by the largest standing army'.[134] In a particularly powerful way, the ragged schools were able to personally involve their audience with the threat presented, as a report of a RSU meeting in the *Daily News* recounted that *'Unless they supported the ragged schools, as a means of preventing crime, they would themselves be exposed to the more disastrous inundation of vice, sin, and misery'.*[135] The readers were challenged with an ultimatum, as the RSU asked *'What would be the position of affairs if the public withdrew their countenance from these institutions? The 13,000 children in these schools would, perhaps, be turned loose again upon the streets'*,[136] and in an Old Testament prophetic style, the RSU announced that the schools must be supported *'for the sake of the future'.*[137] This challenging rhetoric affirmed that the street-child demon could only be pacified by sacrifices (of financial and voluntary support) to the ragged schools. Furthermore, this language implied that only the ragged schools could realistically solve the pauper problem.

This chapter has shown how the ragged schools were able to present street-children as a significant threat to the safety of society, and it has been argued that in the disease and criminal frames the movement built on imagery stemming from pre-existing fears. The use of threatening descriptions that were particularly relevant to Victorian society is likely to have increased the potency of the street-child threat, and therefore to have resulted in a bigger impact on the audience. In connection with the theories of problematisation from Schrover and Cohen that have been referred to,[138] this chapter has plainly shown how issues were attached to the pauper problem, as the street-child became closely linked with wider concerns, and consequently the street-child, and child poverty also, came to represent a threat to the whole of society. Further than this, the ragged school movement was able to present their institution as the answer to the pauper problem they described, and by association they were also the answer to the wider problems of disease, delinquency, and revolution. The following chapter assesses how the pauper problem was refined and specified through the street-children's identification and alienation from civilised, middle-class society.

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[134] 'Ragged school union', *The Times*, 10 May 1859, p.6.
[135] 'Ragged school union', *Daily News*, 26 February 1857.
[136] 'Ragged school union', *Daily News*, 15 May 1850.
[137] 'Ragged School Union …no.6 June,1848', p.8.
[138] See p.2.

Chapter three: The Other- *'Barbarians in the midst of civilisation'*

The previous chapter showed that language was able to convert street-children into a threatening presence. Leading on from this, this chapter shows how the same children were alienated and detached from the middle-class' circle of experience. It was mentioned earlier that wider theories of deviancy and the creation of sub-cultures would provide significant groundwork for this thesis,[139] and therefore, before expanding on the use of othering language, the theoretical underpinning of this chapter will be briefly re-capped.

This research utilises Becker's theory that communities create deviancy by instigating the rules of what constitutes deviancy and applying them to certain groups, leading to the formation of a sub-culture within society, or what is referred to here as 'the Other'. [140] In relation to the definition of deviancy, the framework from Zedner's article on female criminality is important here, as this chapter shows that the street-child's nonconformity to the middle-class picture of childhood qualified them as deviant.[141] Further, with reference to the solidification of sub-cultures, Cohen's argument that was mentioned earlier,[142] that clothing or style can become indicative of being a member of the deviant group is helpful here, as the identifying features of the street-children are surveyed. Finally, in relation to the potential effect of othering language, Armstrong's article on the urban middle-class' 'colonising' of rural communities is useful in understanding the impact that the middle-class' alienating terminology had. Armstrong has shown how the othering language of the middle-class' descriptions of rural communities, led to these peoples being marginalised to a *'cultural periphery within Great Britain'*[143] and subordinated to *'an English core'*.[144] More specifically, Armstrong has described how the inherent inferiority of rural populations was suggested by the presence of a familiar middle-class, urban figure in photographs of local people. This underlined the peoples' otherness and subservience, as *'These images cast the literate urban individual in the role of the father and mentor to compliant children, completely obfuscating the fact that he is the intruder in their household, not they in his'.*[145] Despite the different subject in Armstrong's work, her theoretical framework is applicable to the manner in which the middle-class RSU members depicted street-children, as is shown during this analysis.

As has been previously stated, historians of the child-saving movement have failed to thoroughly deconstruct the functionality of othering language. It has been seen that Mahood and Littlewood have pigeon-holed the child-savers' use of extreme othering language during descriptions

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[139] See p.3.
[140] Becker as quoted in Cohen's *Folk devils*, p.13.
[141] Zedner, 'Women, crime, and penal responses'.
[142] See p.3.
[143] Armstrong, 'Emily's ghost', p.248.
[144] Armstrong, 'Emily's ghost', p.248.
[145] Armstrong, 'Emily's ghost', p.248.

of the street-children as *'class racism'*.[146] On the other hand, Cunningham has argued that othering terminology was an expression of the cultural precipice that existed between the civilised middle-class and the *'street Arabs'*,[147] as the writer sought to *'adequately convey to readers the horror of what was being described. Writers simply strained for an appropriately shocking analogy'*.[148]This chapter examines the various techniques used to suggest the otherness of the street-children, and analyses their problematising and rhetorical role. Through deconstructing the Other within ragged school texts, this chapter provides a deeper understanding of the purpose of this language. When the construction of the Other has been analysed, it may be possible to deduce whether the use of this language is nothing more than a symptom of Victorian bigotry, or whether it played a more significant role as a rhetorical tool. To begin, the way that the difference of the children was asserted is explored, and following this is an analysis of the role of the mowgli and the animal frames. In addition to examining the presentation of racial and animalistic language, this chapter incorporates the wider context that this language was used in, in order to understand its impact on the audience more thoroughly.

How the Other half live

Despite street-children having *'become something of an institution to be noted by every observer'*[149], by the mid-nineteenth century the middle-class was able to create a distinct separation between themselves and the poor. This section investigates how pauper families and street-children were removed from the middle-class sphere and labelled as the 'Other', and how this contributed to the problematisation of the pauper problem. To begin, the emphatic stress on otherness during descriptions of the poor's homes in ragged school material is examined.

The vast cavity that separated the middle-class family experience from the experience of poor households was shown through direct comparisons, which forced the poor to be gauged in relation to the middle-class notion of family life. This is seen in the way that the homes of the poor were critiqued according to their lack of 'homeliness', a markedly middle-class value. Hall clearly held the poor up to middle-class ideas of the home, as he wrote that their *'dwellings are scarcely cheered by a single ray of sunshine, or cleansed by a single pitcher of water'*.[150] The use of the middle-class template of home is apparent in Carpenter's passionate avowal that *'I conceive it is in the nature of children to be in a home, and to feel around them (as the Creator appointed) a family attachment and sympathy'*.[151] It has already been shown that the home was felt to be central in the formation of

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[146] Mahood and Littlewood, 'The "vicious" girl and the "street-corner" boy', p.552.
[147] Cunningham, *The children of the poor*, p.106.
[148] Cunningham, *The children of the poor*, p.122.
[149] Cunningham, *The children of the poor*, p.117.
[150] Hall, *Sought and saved*, p.4.
[151] Carpenter, 'What shall we do with our pauper children?', p.15.

morality.[152] Building on this concept Guthrie asserted that the ideal start for children entailed parents who would *'train up their children as olive plants, around the domestic table, and rear them within the tender, kind, holy, and heaven-blessed circle of a domestic home, - a home where they might nurse those precious affections toward parents, brothers, sisters, and smiling babes'.*[153] The centrality of the home in shaping children was also stated during a report of RSU meeting published in *The Times* in 1850, wherein the difficulties of the students were attributed to them having never *'experienced the comforts of home'.*[154] Moreover, the sheer otherness of the street-child's lodgings meant that they could not be classified within the same category as middle-class homes. An article in *The Ragged School Magazine* in 1864 entitled *'Life and death in Bethnal Green'* demonstrates this, as the cellar-dwelling of a poor family is consistently referred to within inverted commas, as if to place significant doubt on whether this structure could ever be classified as 'home'.[155]

The influence of the middle-class' preconceived ideas on their outlook is similarly evident in the way poor children were depicted. In chapter one the way that street-children were held up to a middle-class image of childhood was described.[156] Yet, within poverty-stricken households where income was reliant on ad-hoc industries, the concept of a childhood centred around play and ignorant of labour was unrealistic. As was mentioned earlier, Mahood and Littlewood have identified that working-class families understandably lived according to different principles, and consequently did not intend to reflect the middle-class family ideal.[157] Nonetheless, in ragged school texts it is possible to see that the children were compared with middle-class ideas of childhood, and clearly found

'*Wentworth street, Whitechapel*', Gustav Doré, 1872

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[152] See image p.26.
[153] Guthrie, 'A plea for ragged schools', p.7.
[154] 'Westminster ragged schools', *The Times*, 24 April 1850, p.5.
[155] 'Life and death in Bethnal Green', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.271.
[156] See p.13.
[157] Mahood and Littlewood, 'The "vicious" girl and the "street-corner" boy'.

lacking. When describing a street-child, Hall recorded how the child's *'movements are not gay and free, boy-like, and nimble. How can they be? For his mind is dark and his heart sinful and sad'.*[158] The image above from Gustav Doré discreetly contrasts the street-child's experience of childhood with the middle-class notion. The sketch shows young infants lounging in the street in the forefront of the image, in close proximity to worn-looking adults. Their bare feet, ill-fitting rags, and idleness are contrasted with a child in the background, who is dressed more tidily and is wearing shoes. Significantly, the child in the background is holding a hoop, which is symbolic of play, accentuating the 'un-childlikeness' of those in the front.

This idea of un-childlikeness is a noticeable feature of ragged school documents. The irreconcilability of the two different experiences led to descriptions that effectively denied that the street-children were, in fact, children, for example through the popular remark that street-children seemed unnaturally older than their years. This focus on un-childlikeness is seen in Cornwallis' description of how poor children's minds were quicker than those from privileged backgrounds, as she wrote *'these uninstructed lads receive knowledge much more rapidly than the less excited brains of the children of steady parents will allow them to do'.*[159] In the same way, Guthrie described a young boy he encountered as *'sharp also with the intelligence beyond his years'.*[160] The age of the children was not only asserted in relation to their minds, but also to their appearance, as after describing a child's dirtiness, Hall goes on to detail the absence of *'the rosy bloom which God has appointed as the sweet ornament of healthy childhood'*, and to remark on the presence of *'wrinkles in that young face, the premature tracery of sin and woe'.*[161] Their un-childlikeness by default made them deviants from what a child should be. Just as Zedner has shown in relation to the defining of female criminality,[162] it can be seen here that the street-child's disparity from the middle-class' ornamental child made him into something alien to society, and wholly Other.

Street-children were further ostracised by descriptions that focused on their ragged clothing. Cohen's theory concerning the identification of deviants has shown how a particular style can become a categorising feature, allowing members of socially deviant groups to be recognised and shunned from society, resulting in the solidification of the sub-culture. Unarguably, the RSU identified the deviants they hoped to reform according to their rags (as rags *'marked the line of their duty and the sphere of their operation'*)[163] and thus the street-children's unkempt appearance automatically marked them as outsiders. By describing them in a categorical manner that highlighted how they could be identified, the children were all placed within the same 'outsider' group in the consciousness of the middle-class. This is especially seen in the text-book like descriptions of ragged children, for example

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158 Hall, *Sought and saved*, p.21.
159 Cornwallis, *The philosophy of the ragged schools*, p.85.
160 Guthrie, 'A plea for the ragged schools', p.9.
161 Hall, *Sought and saved*, p.21.
162 Zedner, 'Women, crime, and penal responses'.
163 'Ragged School Union', *The Times*, 16 May 1849, p.5.

the RSU described their quarry as *'Neglected youths* […] *With tattered garments and "unwashen heads," Fresh from the mud of the river-bank or street'*,[164] or as children *'of the very lowest description'*, many of whom were *'without shoes or stockings'*.[165] More extensively, Hall notes *'See, how tattered and patched is every garment he has on; his bare feet are brown with a covering of dirt of long-standing; through the holes in his dress the winter-blast finds free entrance'*.[166] The drawing below, again by Doré, shows the contrast between the ragged children and their middle-class saviours. At the beginning of this chapter, Armstrong's argument that the contrasting presence of a middle-class gentleman is able to undermine the 'primitive' individual alongside him was mentioned. In the below image from Doré the towering presence of the middle-class men solidifies the distance between the two social groups. The helplessness of the children is shown through the focus on the sickly child in the centre of the sketch, which is juxtaposed against the fit middle-class gentlemen. As well as this, the children's insubstantial rags and bare-feet are cast against the warmly dressed middle-class figures. Furthermore, the candlelight illuminating the scene almost emanates from the genteel figure, perhaps symbolising his civilising influence, a theme that is returned to later in this chapter.

Evidently, the middle-class observers looked on the pauper problem using spectacles influenced by their own surroundings and expectations, and consequently upheld pauper families to a

'Found in the street', **Gustav Doré, 1872**

standard they could not adhere to. It has been seen that language which forced poor children to be compared with the middle-class was able to emphasise their otherness and make them alien to middle-class experience. However, this removal was also achieved in a more extreme and dramatic manner, as RSU rhetoric was able to geographically remove the poor from British society by utilising the imagination of the middle-class reader.

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[164] 'The ragged school', a poem originally published in *The Ragged School Magazine*, and re-published in *The Hull Packet and East Riding*, 5 January 1849. A complete copy of this poem is included in the appendix.
[165] Corwallis, *The philosophy of the ragged schools*, p.32.
[166] Hall, *Sought and saved*, p.21.

Sharing cities, separate worlds

The construction of the Other reached its pinnacle in the adoption of frames that suggested the children's inherent and genetic dissimilarity from the norm. Both the mowgli and the animal frames underlined the difference of the children in a dramatic fashion that took the assertion of difference to an extreme, severing any common ground that existed. These two frames performed a similar function, which is confirmed through their interwoven nature. The connection between the two is shown in the fact that in over 60 per-cent of the instances the animal frame appeared in, it was used alongside the mowgli frame.[167] Notably, the divide made here between 'mowgli' and 'animal' imagery is an artificial one, as the mid-Victorian period did not always provide clear lines between racial and animalistic terminology. Understandably, therefore, the two frames were regularly co-dependent within texts, acting symbiotically to create an authoritative picture of the Other. This section begins by documenting the use of the mowgli frame, and then moves on to consider the animal frame. By deconstructing the function and significance of these two frames, the RSU's attitude towards the children may be understood more fully. Through this analysis, Mahood and Littlewood's statement that othering language exemplified *'class racism'*[168] is contended with, as the deeper significance of these frames will be shown. Simultaneously, this section augments Cunningham's argument that the rhetoric was a hyperbolic expression of cultural difference, as the wider function of these frames is explored.

The mowgli frame is clearly significant in the problematisation of the pauper problem, as figures 1 and 2[169] have concurred by showing that the frame appeared in just under a fifth of the texts analysed. In order to form a fair understanding of the mowgli frame, its wider contextual background must first be understood. The late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century witnessed an explosion in zeal, as the British Empire was increasingly portrayed as *'"destined to be the instrument* […]*to carry* [Christ's] *salvation to the end of the earth"'.*[170] Symptomatic of this, the London Missionary Society (LMS) succeeded in sending missionaries to Tahiti, South Africa, Ceylon, Canton, Demerara, Malacca, and Madagascar over a 22 year period.[171] The ragged schools' financial reliance on the public meant that the RSU was forced to compete with these exciting missions to exotic locations. The leaders of the movement regularly drew attention to the disproportionate support for overseas missions, which caused the neglect of the needy within local cities, for example Carpenter passionately wrote that *'The mass of society* […] *are better acquainted with the actual condition of remote savage nations, than with the real life and springs of action of these children'.*[172] In a similar

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[167] This figure has been established using the frame analysis carried out on all of the texts, including the newspaper reports.
[168] Mahood and Littlewood, 'The "vicious" girl and the "street-corner" boy', p.552.
[169] See pp.10-11.
[170] Thomas Haweis, as quoted in S.J. Brown's *Providence and Empire 1815-1914* (Harlow 2008) p.35.
[171] Brown, *Providence and Empire*, p.32.
[172] Carpenter, 'Reformatory schools for the children of the perishing and dangerous classes', p.4.

tone, Guthrie asked *'Is it right to do so much to reclaim the heathen abroad, and refuse the only means of reclaiming our heathen children at home?'.*[173] Despite the rivalry expressed by Carpenter and Guthrie, ragged school documents borrowed narrative techniques from their competitors in the hope of attracting a captivated, and generous, audience.

Middle-class readers were steered into wild and distant lands during descriptions of the children who inhabited their very own streets through the use of discovery-style language, which made the topic of child poverty engaging for an audience already acclimatised to this form of narration. Explorative introductions display this discovery-style, plainly mimicking the overseas missions. An example is seen in an article in *The Ragged School Magazine*, wherein the author emphasised the mysteriousness of poor districts by stating that *'the east of London is unknown* […] *few, very few, know anything of the vast neighbourhoods comprised in the three parishes of Shoreditch, Whitechapel, and Bethnal Green'.*[174] This style is displayed yet more dramatically by Hall in 1855, who proclaimed *'Let us visit one of those districts in which he* [the street-child] *may be found* […] *Let us inquire somewhat carefully into his hopes and fears, his plans and expectations; where he lurks, how he looks and what he does. Reader, will you go with us on this exploring expedition?'.*[175] This extract stresses the difference of the children, as even their *'hopes and fears'*, *'looks'*, and actions are worthy of analysis. This method of geographically moving the street-children to uncharted plains sought to generate interest in the topic of child poverty. Complementing this imagery of foreign lands, the mowgli frame also appears in the use of metaphors or similes that labelled the street-children as foreign themselves.

'Uncared for', **Augustus Mulready, 1871**

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[173] Guthrie, 'A plea for ragged schools', p.38.
[174] 'Life and death in Bethnal Green', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.271.
[175] Hall, *Sought and saved*, p.19.

Words and phrases that unarguably stated the racial difference of the children were a standard fixture of ragged school documents. The terms *'heathen'*, *'natives'*, and *'savages'* consistently re-emerge during descriptions of the street-children. The many manifestations of the mowgli frame are shown using only a small selection of extracts, which see the children labelled as a *'wild and lawless race'*,[176] who are as *'wild as desert savages'*,[177] and as *'rude as the heathen'*.[178] Carpenter emphasised the distinctness of the children within workhouses by quoting a Mr Nassau Senior, an Educational Commissioner, who used the mowgli frame in conjunction with the fatalism frame when he said that the children are *'a tribe, the same names from the same families and the same streets fill the Workhouse; it sometimes contains three generations'*.[179] Similarly, this idea of a tribe that is separate from society is implicit in the phrase *'street Arabs'*, which grew quickly in popularity over this period.[180] Again, continuity can be seen in the ragged school rhetoric through the four examples of mowgli language given above, as these extracts are taken from both newspaper reports and RSU articles, stretching from 1847 to 1861.

In addition to racial terminology, comparisons between the street-children and foreign groups receiving missionary attention underscored the need to intervene in the children's lives, for example the suggestion that *'the tribes of London'* are *'equally wild'* as the *'barbarous tribes of Africa'*.[181] Correspondingly, a newspaper report of a RSU meeting in 1849 declared that *'there were to be found instances of heathenism just as striking in the courts and alleys of this Christian city as in the depths of Pekin or the haunts of Timbuctoo'*.[182] Likewise, *The Ragged School Magazine* argued in 1864 that the children exemplified *'British heathen as deeply sunk in vice and misery as the Fijian or the Kaffir'*.[183] These clear parallels between street-children and foreign 'heathen' may have been intended to induce feelings of guilt in the public who supported distant action while forgetting the local needy. The painting by Augustus Mulready shown above is an intense example of this guilt-inducing argument. The two street-children are shown at pitiful figures in need of help. The girl is offering a flower, while fixing the viewer with a haunting stare. On the other hand, the young boy is curled up in despair with his face in his hands. Above the two children, an old missionary poster remains on the wall, which is proclaiming *'The triumph of Christianity'* in the mission-field. This bitter-sweet contrast stresses the hypocrisy of those supporting foreign missions, while forgetting the *'Uncared for'*. This argument is also advocated by the Duke of Argyll's statement during a RSU meeting in 1847 that *'Some persons objected to mission to the heathen world on the grounds that in their own*

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[176] 'Field lane ragged school', *The Times*, 2 May 1850, p.8.
[177] Guthrie, 'A plea for ragged schools', p.12.
[178] 'The ragged school', *The Hull Packet and East Riding*, 5 January 1849.
[179] Carpenter, 'What shall we do with our pauper children?', p.4.
[180] The popularity of the term *'street Arab'* has been accredited to Thomas Guthrie by Cunningham, p.107.
[181] 'Abroad and at home: A glance at the May campaign', *The Ragged School Magazine,* 1864, p.145.
[182] 'Ragged school union', *The Times*, 16 May 1849, p.5.
[183] 'Ragged schools reviewed: The tree and its fruits', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.49.

land they were surrounded by heathens, and the assertion was, he regretted to say, but too true'.[184]
Again, this conscience-pricking language is demonstrated in the case developed by Hall, as he wrote
*'In what foreign land can we find children more heathenish- in greater danger of perishing, or more
loudly claiming our pity, our efforts and our prayers?'.*[185] Summing this argument up within a few
words, the poem 'The ragged school boy' stated; *'He has never seen a Bible, he has never heard a
prayer; Yet for heathens far less ignorant we care'.*[186] Furthermore, the middle-class audience are
reminded of the very real injustices within Britain by Guthrie's cutting words that there are *'savages
in the midst of civilisation, and heathens in the midst of Christianity'.*[187] Guthrie's terminology may
have been particularly shocking and powerful to his British audience in 1852, as it followed the
extensively publicised Great Exhibition, which opened in London in celebration of the world's
cultural and technological achievements only the year before.

Finally, othering rhetoric could be elevated further by the incorporation of the animal frame.
Figure 2 showed the animal frame to be the most popular in documents published directly by the
RSU, appearing in just under a quarter of the 24 texts analysed, whereas it featured significantly less
prominently in the newspapers, appearing in only one-tenth.[188] It was mentioned earlier that the
different intentions of the texts may influence the frames used, as the newspaper reports were mainly
focused on detailing the progress of the ragged schools, and were less concerned with communicating,
and problematising, the pauper problem. For this reason, the following analysis is primarily based on
the ragged school documents, as they provide the most engaging examples of the animal frame.

As was shown above in relation to the mowgli frame, animalistic imagery could be promoted
in texts through the insertion of terminology with animalistic connotations, for example the terms

'Ragged school truants captured', **unknown source, 1871**

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[184] 'Ragged School Union', *The Times* 16 May 1849, p.5.
[185] Hall, *Sought and saved*, p.24.
[186] 'The ragged school boy', a poem originally published in *The Ragged School Magazine*, and re-published in
Berrow's Worcester Journal, 7 February 1857, p.3. A complete copy of this poem is included in the appendix.
[187] Guthrie, 'Memorial on the claim of the ragged industrial schools', p.3.
[188] See pp.10-11.

'prowl', 'den', and 'wild' regularly appeared, hinting at the predatory nature of the children. Accounts of the children incorporated the animal frame by asserting their primitiveness, as they were described as 'ravenous beasts',[189] which were 'soured and brutalised',[190] with a 'rough and almost untameable nature'.[191] Portrayals of the street-children commonly contained small nudges towards animalistic imagery, as seen in a story related in *The Ragged School Magazine* of two poverty-stricken sisters who were found 'crawling along the pavement […] They did not beg but simply crawled along'.[192] Similarly, the animal frame may be used more explicitly, for example later in the same issue the children are described as being 'sunken lower than the level of the brute […] creatures whom we can scarcely recognise as men'.[193] The picture above provides a good example of the animalistic imagery used, as the children are shown as crouching figures hidden behind a makeshift den. They are presented as feral and wild-looking, an idea also communicated through the title's use of the word 'captured' to describe the encounter. As well as this, the severe difference between the street-children and their middle-class captors is again indicated by the children's bare, dirty feet and torn clothes.

Like the mowgli frame, the animal frame also witnessed direct comparisons with particular animals. However, despite the prominence of the menacing animalistic language that has been mentioned, the comparisons drawn were overwhelmingly sympathetic. When referencing the street-children. Carpenter quoted a sermon, saying 'The lost sheep are left to wander neglected in their wilderness of ignorance'.[194] Comparably, Guthrie described how the children were driven 'like sheep to the hills, or cattle to the field'[195] in the hope of obtaining food. These comparisons underscored the children's need for guidance and protection, especially as the metaphor of sheep in particular held Christian connotations of duty. Cattle-like imagery is also used in *The Ragged School Magazine*, which described how the poor 'are herded together in such close proximity that would not be tolerated by savages, and which brutes would resist',[196] plainly an extract that shows the close ties between the mowgli and animal frames. Pitying imagery is again seen in the report of a RSU meeting featured in the *Daily News* in 1857, in which the schools were described as the 'means of bringing into habits of order the wild, lawless, and irregular population of our great towns- men who lived in such dark and dismal holes that no men of ordinary means would kennel his dog in'.[197] The use of sympathetic language alongside the animal frame may be more accurately understood when the broader picture of the growing animal rights movement is provided.

The strong connection between animal and child welfare has been noted by Joyce and

[189] Guthrie, 'A plea for ragged schools', p.22.
[190] Cornwallis, *The philosophy of the ragged schools*, p.23.
[191] 'Crime and its causes', p.3.
[192] 'Encouragement and hope: Two sisters', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.66.
[193] 'As it was and as it is', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.87.
[194] Carpenter, 'The claims of the ragged schools', p.15.
[195] Guthrie, 'A plea for ragged schools', p.12.
[196] 'Life and death in Bethnal Green', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.272.
[197] 'Ragged School Union', *Daily News*, 26 February 1857.

Stephen Antler in relation to the United States, as they have shown that the child protection movement was *'an offshoot of animal protective work'.[198]* Antler and Antler have argued that the adoption of 'helpless animal' metaphors encouraged the public to empathise with abused children, as *'Once the analogy was made* […] *that the child was, in fact, a helpless animal, it became possible to protect children from physical abuse and neglect that was committed by parents of guardians'.[199]* In relation to the animal rights movement in Britain, Harriet Ritvo has traced its emergence during the Victorian period, and has shown that by 1835 the Society for the Protection of Animals had received the royal patronage of the Duchess of Kent,[200] and would receive the support of Queen Victoria only five years later. The presence of strong animal rights sentiments at this point supplements our understanding of why sympathetic animalistic terminology was employed during descriptions of the children, as the imagery helped to categorise the children as a vulnerable group.

This chapter has shown how othering language was used to problematise the issue of child poverty, as through this language the children were rounded into one group, 'the Other', which was excluded from society. Beyond this, it has also been demonstrated that the use of racial and animalistic terminology within ragged school texts cannot be haphazardly cast aside as an example of *'class racism'*, as this deduction fails to recognise the problematising function of this language. It has been shown that the significance of both the mowgli and the animal frame can only be fully understood when their wider context is incorporated into the analysis. By considering the atmosphere in which the mowgli and animal frames were used, it has been revealed that their imagery carried a weight of meaning that is sometimes overlooked by contemporary scholars. Up to this point, the threatening and othering imagery has been looked at independently from the ragged schools' core ideological incentive of transforming the children. The following chapter investigates how the RSU's belief in the reclaiming power of the Gospel was able to be used in conjunction with the extreme othering imagery that has been looked at here.

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[198] Joyce Antler and Stephen Antler, 'From child rescue to family protection: The evolution of the child protective movement in the United States', *Children and Youth Services Review* 1 (1979) pp.199-209, p.177.
[199] Antler and Antler, 'From child rescue to family protection', p.178.
[200] H. Ritvo, 'Plus Ça Change: Antivivisection Then and Now', *Bioscience*, 34:10 (November 1984) pp. pp.626-633, p.627.

Chapter four: The hope- *'Little angels'*

The focus of this thesis so far has been on how the RSU presented street-children as an alien threat by associating them with menacing issues, and emphatically stressing their otherness. In contrast, this chapter investigates the faith that the ragged schools proclaimed, and the goal that they worked towards. Therefore, the reclaiming and reincorporating hope of the ragged schools is a core focus here, as understanding the RSU's belief in the transformative power of the Gospel is integral to understanding the movement's plans for the children. The previous chapter analysed how the children were portrayed as the Other through the use of language that focused on their difference from society. It was briefly mentioned that scholars have overlooked the way that othering language could be used as a rhetorical tool to convey the transformative power of the Gospel. By focusing on the terminology used to express the change in the street-children, this chapter explores the 'other side of the Other', as it is shown that othering language did not solely express otherness, but signified dramatic change.

It has already been made clear that the ragged schools' value lay in their supposed ability to solve the pauper problem. Logically, the 'finished product' of their struggles, the transformed street-child, represented the fruits of the ragged schools' labour, and the financial investment of their audience. Consequently the child's transformation needed to be significant in order to communicate the worth of the movement. As has been stated, the theories of deviancy used here have not addressed how deviants can be reintegrated into society, however this was the primary aim of the ragged schools. This chapter therefore analyses how the sub-cultural gap was breached through the transformation of the children, as they were converted from street-children into home-children. When considering the change in the street-children, Davin's assertion that accent acted as a major signifier of street-child transformation, which was mentioned earlier,[201] is a core underlying theory. Leading on from this, the final section of this chapter deconstructs the RSU's formation of the transformed street-child in the light of this idea of a middle-class make-over. Before looking at the movement's transformative hope, this chapter opens by exploring the potential and value attributed to the average street-child, and the pitying atmosphere that was created within texts.

'Our pauper children'

The notion that the neglected street-child was simultaneously pitied and feared that was cited earlier[202] acts as the central underpinning theory here. We have seen how the street-children were referred to using language that described them as a disease, as criminals, as heathen, and as animals. In contrast

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[201] See p.4.
[202] See p.6.

with this, the RSU simultaneously presented street-children, who were still unsaved and uncivilised, using pitying and empathetic terminology. It has been observed during this case-study that the innocence frame was an essential element in the pitiful presentation of street-children, as the frame analysis identified it in a tenth of the newspapers, as well as a tenth of the ragged school documents.[203] Despite it not being an especially popular frame, it was evidently a steadfast element in the arguments proposed in both newspaper reports of RSU meetings, and articles directly published by the movement. Through analysing how the ragged schools simultaneously labelled the children as brutes as well as angels, this section intends to expand on the pity/fear theory used by Cunningham, Gilfoyle and Jackson.[204]

The previous chapters showed that the children were portrayed as *'dirty in aspect and foul in language'*,[205] and fundamentally un-childlike. However, the same dirty, heathen street-children were also presented as helpless infants, in accordance with the Victorian ideas about childhood. A particularly sentimental example of this is seen in the RSU poem 'The outcast children's cry', which was quoted in chapter two due to its threatening proclamation *'We are thousands- many thousands; Every day our ranks increase'.*[206] This same poem emphasised the enduring innocence of the street-child, despite their outward appearance, as it opened with the romanticised description; *'Beautiful the children's faces, Spite of all that mars and scars; To the inmost heart appealing, Calling forth love's tend'rest feeling, Steeping all the soul in tears'.*[207] To a similar effect, Guthrie, from whose pen we earlier read the powerful phrase that the street-child was the *'criminal in the bud'*,[208] emotively described a street-child he encountered as having *'the sweetest face I ever saw'*, however *'his bed was*
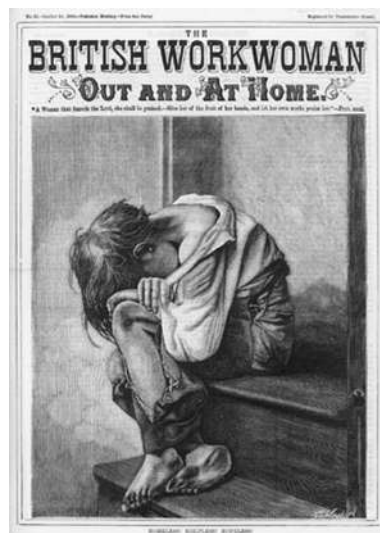
This image was published in *The British Workwoman* on 1 October 1866. The caption below the image reads *'Homeless! Helpless! Hopeless!'*.

[203] See pp.10-11.
[204] See p.6.
[205] 'Ragged schools reviewed: The tree and its fruit', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.50.
[206] 'The outcast children's cry', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.70.
[207] 'The outcast children's cry', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.70.
[208] Guthrie, 'Memorial on the claim of ragged industrial schools', p.8.

the stone pavement,-his pillow a brick'. He goes on to utilise the innocence frame, stating how the poor boy *'lay calm in sleep, forgetful of all his sorrows, he looked a picture of injured innocence'*. Guthrie then tragically wrote how this boy had *'neither father nor mother, brother nor friend, in the wide world'*, and concluded by saying *'I could not get that boy out of my head or heart for days and nights together'.*[209] Guthrie's use of a specific encounter endears the poor boy to the reader, and his focus on the child-likeness of the boy emphasised the idea of purity and innocence, clearly diverging from the war-like descriptions of armies of juvenile delinquents described in chapter two. The image shown above demonstrates how the unreformed street-child was portrayed in an empathy-stirring manner, and could almost be seen as a depiction of the child described by Guthrie. The poor child's weakness is expressed in his despairing pose, and his vulnerability is suggested by his exposed shoulder and leg. Further, the caption directly stresses the need of the child, and his inability to help himself, as it declares *'Homeless! Helpless! Hopeless!'*. The descriptions of helplessness and innocence shown here are visibly at odds with the fearful image of the Other seen earlier.

Language that underscored the childlike appearance and inherent purity of the street-children worked to avoid the threatening image of the juvenile delinquent, which we witnessed being constructed in chapter two. For example, this is seen in Carpenter's poignant account of the *'little fellows whose heads hardly reached above the dock'*, who were brought before the Magistrates and imprisoned for petty crimes.[210] Comparably, in Lord Ashley's 1859 letter to *The Times* he wrote that *'these children were acting daily in breach of the law of the land* [...]*, and he (the noble Lord) did not hesitate to say that these children, so far as knowledge went, were not aware of breaking any one law, either human or divine',*[211] plainly arguing that the children's naivety made them innocent. Diverging further from the notion of the street-child's inherent criminality, Guthrie employed the innocence frame as he wrote that the children have *'less sinned than be sinned against'*.[212] In reference to the sentencing of an impoverished street-child for theft, Guthrie forcefully stated that *'The law in such cases may pronounce its sentence; but humanity, reason, and religion revolt against it* [...] *in the case of these unhappy children who are suffering for the crime of their parents, and neglect of society, with what truth might this verdict be returned'.*[213] Previously we saw how the fatalism and criminal frames were combined in Guthrie's writing to create an intimidating picture of inevitable delinquency, however here we see Guthrie using the fatalism and innocence frames to assert the child's blamelessness, and even victimisation, as the child's criminality is instead attributed to their parents and to society. In accordance with the pity/fear theory, it is clear that within ragged school documents the street-children were depicted in incompatible ways; they were both criminal and innocent as well as pitied and feared.

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[209] Guthrie, 'A plea for ragged schools', p.15.
[210] Carpenter, 'The claims of ragged schools', p.11.
[211] 'The earl of Shaftesbury on ragged schools', *The Times*, 22 October 1859, p.8.
[212] Guthrie, 'A plea for ragged schools', p.29.
[213] Guthrie, 'A plea for ragged schools', p.30.

Just as the child was both pitied and feared, the child was also adopted as well as alienated. In the previous chapter the various ways that the street-child was distanced from society were explored. Yet, conflicting with this, the ragged school texts also commonly claimed the pauper problem, and emphatically placed value on the children by stressing that they *'"belong to the human family"'*.[214] In stark contrast with the usage of the mowgli and animal frames that was seen earlier, the children's worth was regularly grounded in the argument that they were part of society, and consequently society's responsibility. Parenting analogies were often used to express this, and as a result quite literally adopted the pauper problem, a rhetorical technique seen in Carpenter's blunt statement *'They are* our *pauper children!'*.[215] This adoption of the problem is also explicitly present in Guthrie's description of the children as *'orphans of the country'*.[216] Flowing from the idea that the children are part of a societal family was the assertion that the children are not really different, which again stands in opposition to the othering language analysed earlier. The image below from Mulready illustrates how difference was downplayed, as the two fatigued children do not reflect the dirty, cunning children described in the previous two chapters. Though the young boy presents clear indications of poverty through the large rip in his trousers and his bare feet, his overall cleanliness and angelic features lessen the gap between him and the middle-class notion of the child. The young girl in particular looks especially middle-class with her blue hair ribbon, undamaged dress, and shoes. Difference is similarly eliminated in an article featured in *The Ragged School Magazine* in 1864, which decreed *'under the ermine of the peer as well as under the rags of the beggar the same great human heart is beating'*.[217] In a strikingly similar way, a *Daily News* report of a RSU meeting in 1846, nearly twenty years earlier, stated that *'under a ragged coat there was often a truly Christian heart […] they had the same mental and moral qualities- they were created by the same God'*.[218]

Evidently, the potential of the street-children was an important feature of the RSU's

***'Wandering minstrels'*, Augustus Mulready, 1876**

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[214] 'Ragged school union…no.6 June, 1848', p.10.
[215] Carpenter, 'What shall we do with our pauper children?', p.3.
[216] Guthrie, 'Memorial on the claim of ragged industrial schools', p.12.
[217] 'Ragged schools reviewed: The tree and its fruits', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.49.
[218] 'The ragged schools', *Daily News*, 20 March 1846.

documents. In chapter two the hopelessness caused by the fatalism frame was narrated, however the ragged school texts also rebuked the pessimism of fatalistic arguments, for example in the RSU's meeting in 1848 fatalism in reference to the children was directly criticised, as the meeting declared that *'there was no decree that doomed that child to eternal ruin beyond the reach of hope'.*[219] Building on this idea of the children's potential, their fundamental worth was also expressed. During the same gathering in 1848, it was proclaimed that the street-child was *'capable of greatness that an angel's grasp of intellect could not comprehend. He was not a weed, to be cast out and trodden under foot as worthless'.*[220] The children's value and potential was likewise emphasised by Guthrie, who wrote; *'Call them, if you choose, the rubbish of society; only let us say, that there are jewels among that rubbish, which would richly repay the expense of searching; and that, bedded in their dark and dismal abodes, precious stones lie there, which only wait to be dug out and polished'.*[221]

By presenting the average street-child as innately precious and fundamentally helpless, the ragged school movement wrung sympathy from their audience. This analysis of how the street-child was presented as valuable has shown how the audience's parental duty was emphasised through the texts' focus on the street-child's childlikeness, which paradoxically existed alongside the focus on un-childlikeness seen in the previous chapter. This section has affirmed the pity/fear notion proposed by Cunningham, Gilfoyle, and Jackson, yet beyond this it has shown that conflicting imagery was a core part of ragged school documents, as the children were both inherently criminal and inherently innocent, both doomed and filled with potential. The manner in which the schools apparently enabled the children to reach their potential is now described.

'For the Gospel is the power of God' (Romans 1:16)

The golden thread running throughout the ragged school documents is the movement's trust in the power of the Christian Gospel to reclaim the children. Christian teaching was not only a feature of the movement, but the very foundation that the schools were built upon. The RSU argued that if the schools were deprived of their religious element, they would inevitably become *'impotent'*,[222] as their ability to cause a change in the street-children was tied up with their roots in the Gospel. The importance of the Gospel's role was eloquently described by the RSU in 1850 through their statement that *'it was not merely with pens and primers they went down into the dark purlieus of misery and guilt, as if these could strike light into benighted minds* […] *but they carried with them the Gospel- that only charter of human freedom- that only lever capable of elevating the morally depraved'.*[223]

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[219] 'Ragged school union…no.6 June, 1848', p.6.
[220] 'Ragged school union…no.6 June, 1848', p.6.
[221] Guthrie, 'A plea for ragged schools', p.35.
[222] 'Crime and its causes', p.3.
[223] 'Crime and its causes', p.3.

Central to the ragged school movement was the doctrine that *'There is not one type of human character, or one constitution of feeling, with which that Gospel cannot grapple with perfect success'*,[224] and *'There was no class proscribed from the influence of the Gospel, and at no class, however high or low, did Christianity pause'* .[225] The Gospel was declared to be universally accessible, as *'There was no form of disease, no degree of degradation, no state of poverty, or want, or woe, where Christianity did not find a footing'.*[226] It was an unshakable tenet of the RSU's thought that all people were equally welcome in God's family, and consequently they aimed to *'bring trophies to the Redeemer's kingdom and accessions to the Redeemer's Church, from all ranks and classes of the alienated and the estranged'.*[227] Further, it was felt that the social divides separating the street-children from society could be radically overcome, as the ragged schools aimed to *'gather in and train for God the outcast children of London'.*[228] Patently, the ultimate aim of the ragged schools was to bring the Other, the street-child, into society, as this was to be *'the effort of our modern days- This is the glory of the "Ragged School"'.*[229] The image below shows how the schools embraced the outcasts, and introduced them into a circle that would foster their transformation. The central focus of this picture is a dirty, ragged girl, whose insubstantial clothing exposes her shoulders, and whose

Untitled image of Lambeth ragged school for girls, published in *The Illustrated London News*, 1846

loose hair falls unkemptly. She is being introduced by a neat, lady-like, female teacher to a room filled with studious young girls, many of whom are wearing bonnets and shawls. The picture seems to imply that the care provided by the ragged school will witness the wretched young girl transform into an angelic Christian child, who would be perfectly in-fitting with society. The success of the ragged schools in integrating the children into society was announced through the proclamation that

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[224] 'Ragged school union…no.6 June, 1848', p.5.
[225] 'Ragged school union…no.6 June, 1848', p.5.
[226] 'Ragged school union…no.6 June, 1848', p.5.
[227] 'Ragged school union…no.6 June, 1848', p.5.
[228] 'Proceedings of a ragged school conference', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.31.
[229] 'The ragged school'*, The Hull Packet and East Riding*, 5 January 1849.

'thousands had been reclaimed', however the work was clearly not yet accomplished, as 'thousands more would be reclaimed to a Christian life and the pale of society'.[230] This statement both celebrates the work of the ragged schools, while underlining the need to maintain the mission.

The ragged school movement held fast to its belief in God's very real ability to oversee a miraculous transformation in even the worst wretches. In reference to those same children earlier labelled as a lethal disease which afflicted society, the 1864 edition of *The Ragged School Magazine* movingly said *'Like the stars that illuminate the firmament o'er us, E'en so shall their spirits be made spotlessly white'.*[231] In order to communicate the success of the schools, the Gospel's ability to transform the *'scholars without and within- both body and soul'*[232] was displayed in language which symbolised transformation in an intense way. Up to this point, the othering language used within ragged school texts has been looked at in a one-dimensional way, as if showing only one side of a coin. The role of this rhetoric can only be completely understood when the latter part of the ragged schools' argument is listened to, as this terminology was instrumental in communicating the movement's ideas of transformation and redemption. Though the disease, criminal, mowgli, and animal frames worked to create a threatening and alien image, they also acted as a linguistic tool that compellingly expressed the ability of the ragged schools to witness *'the moral wilderness become a fruitful garden'*,[233] which is a function that has gone unnoticed in the wider scholarly material.

Following descriptions of the children that heavily utilised these frames, the author was able to communicate the power the ragged schools had harnessed by turning the imagery around. This is seen in the way that the schools' effectiveness was conveyed using the disease frame, as *'souls leprous with sin have been baptised in the blood that cleanseth'*,[234] thanks to the efforts of the ragged schools, which were the *'antidote and cure'* to the *'moral disease that afflicts the human race'.*[235] Equally, *The Ragged School Magazine* preached that *'true practical Christianity is equal to heal every social ulcer as well as all moral diseases'.*[236] In the same way that the disease frame was turned around the criminal frame was also, as the schools were upheld as the institution that had *'tamed'*[237] delinquents. Again, the glory is relayed back to the power of the Gospel, as the RSU stated *'the same Gospel which had tamed the cannibal was equal to the reclamation of the juvenile criminals and outcasts of London'.*[238] The article then goes on to say *'youths who had been nurtured in crime by parents unworthy of the name are now winning their bread honestly'.*[239] In relation to the mowgli frame, racial terminology was also turned around, as seen during the 1848 RSU meeting where it was

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[230] 'London ragged school union', *Daily News*, 14 February 1855.
[231] 'A plea for teachers', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.199.
[232] Hall, *Sought and saved*, p.19.
[233] Cornwallis, *The philosophy of ragged schools*, p.62.
[234] 'Abroad and at home', *The Ragged School Magazine*, p.149.
[235] Hall, *Sought and saved*, p.2.
[236] 'Ragged schools reviewed: The tree and its fruits', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.50.
[237] 'Ragged schools reviewed: the tree and its fruits', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.50.
[238] 'Abroad and at home', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.149.
[239] 'Abroad and at home', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.149.

asserted that *'none were so barbarous that it could not transform'*,[240] and again in the *Daily News* report of the 1862 meeting, which praised *'the wondrous work on behalf of those who, in morals and mind, were sunk as low as the natives of the Feejee Islands'*.[241] The animal frame was used to a similar effect, as the power of the Gospel to *'thoroughly control and break in'*[242] was proclaimed.

Beyond the turning-around of the four frames described above, the effectiveness of the ragged schools was most powerfully communicated through the image of the transformed street-child. Leading on from this, the following section explores how ragged schools texts depicted their success through the transformed children, and from this the role of the street-child's transformation may be understood.

The middle-class make-over

It has been shown that the RSU's depiction of the untransformed street-child wavered between evoking fear and evoking pity, as both negative and sympathetic imagery was used within their documents. On the other hand, the movement's description of the transformed street-child was highly consistent, as is shown during this analysis.

It has been stated that the transformation of the children was integrally important in the ragged school campaign, as it was the linchpin that communicated their achievements and the potentiality of solving the pauper problem by the successful integration of the children into society. Earlier we saw how extreme othering imagery was more prevalent in the documents whose primary aim was communicating the severity of the pauper problem. Equally, the image of the transformed street-child is seen most distinctly in the texts intending to show the achievements of the ragged schools. One of the most obvious examples of texts with this intention are the newspaper reports which detailed RSU prize-giving ceremonies, and effectively upheld the ragged schools' 'finished product' to their audience. Nevertheless, the image of the transformed child has been re-assembled using examples drawn from all of the RSU sources analysed here, though it is helpful to note the particular achievement-conveying function of some of the texts.

In relation to the image of the model transformed child this section builds upon the theory proposed by Davin that was referred to earlier.[243] In her analysis of waif stories, Davin has commented on how the accent of the waifs *'may change in the course of the story to signify transformation'*,[244] furthermore she has pointed out the connection between becoming more middle-class and becoming Christian. During this research it has become evident that a similar phenomenon

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[240] 'Ragged school union…no.6 June, 1848', p.5.
[241] 'Ragged school union', *Daily News*, 26 February 1862.
[242] Guthrie, 'A plea for ragged schools', p.19.
[243] See p.4.
[244] Davin, 'Waif stories', p.76.

occurred within ragged school documents, as the street-child's conversion into a Christian home-child was denoted by an increasing conformity to the middle-class idea of the child. In the previous chapter it was demonstrated that the children's deviance from middle-class ideas of childhood placed them outside of society. This logic remains true in relation to the re-incorporation of the children, as their compliance with the middle-class seemed to denote the school's successful integration of its students.

Building on the idea of a middle-class transformation, it is evident that there was a close association between the notions of becoming civilised, or middle-class, and becoming Christian, which is seen in the movement's claim to be both *a civilising and religious influence'.*[245] Stemming from this observation, it is notable that the Gospel's transformative power was perhaps most visible in the elimination of the children's rags. It was shown earlier that their ragged clothing came to act as an identifying mark of the street-child and outcast, and consequently their replacement epitomised the child's transition into society. A report of a RSU prize-giving ceremony in 1861 commented on the alteration in the children's appearance, saying *'There was nothing less likely to explain the title of "Ragged School" Union than the appearance of the scholars, whose neat appearance and orderly behaviour would do no discredit to establishments with more pretentious titles'.*[246] Likewise, the physical transformation of the children was described during the apparently true story entitled *'Two sisters'*, which was mentioned in the last chapter. Prior to the two girls attending the school they were *'very dirty, ragged, and most deplorable'*, yet following their enrolment they became *'so altered in appearance that it would be difficult to recognise them as the same children'.*[247] The photograph included below captures a group of 'transformed' ragged school children. Unlike the ragged, dirty, bare-footed pictures that have been included up to this point, the children are well-groomed according to their gender, with the girls wearing spotless white pinafores, and the boys wearing buttoned up tops. Tellingly, there isn't a bare foot in sight. The connection between the transformation in dress and

Photograph of Union Street ragged school, unknown source and year

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[245] 'Ragged school union', *The Times*, 16 May 1849 p.5.
[246] 'Ragged school union', *Daily News*, 20 March 1861.
[247] 'Encouragement and hope: Two sisters', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.67.

the spiritual conversion is more overtly seen in a speech given by Lord Ashley in 1857, when he described how the schools *'received them ragged, but their object was to turn them out clothed, as their object was to receive them heathen and turn them out accomplished Christians'.*[248] Just as Davin saw the street-child's conformation to middle-class speech as an identifier of becoming Christian, the replacement of the children's rags also became closely connected to their apparent conversion. It was shown in chapter three that rags came to symbolise the children's deviancy, and membership of the delinquent's sub-culture. In the same way, undamaged, presentable clothes came to symbolise the children's new Christian faith, and official entrance into society, therefore overcoming the sub-cultural gap.

In addition to changes in the children's appearance, the schools also rejoiced in the alterations in their students' behaviour and morality. Earlier Cornwallis' description of the chaotic scene of *'open rebellion'* in the early days of the ragged school on *'B-street'* [249] was referred to. In direct contrast, *The Ragged School Magazine* noted in reference to one particular site how *'the school, which was formerly a Babel, is now a model for order'*,[250] and in a comparable way the orderliness of the children was communicated during a ragged school meeting, which declared that *'The children who attended* [the schools]*, instead of being noisy, loved their teachers, and were therefore quiet and attentive'.*[251] The success of the schools in reforming the children's characters was similarly mentioned during a prize-giving ceremony related in the *Daily News* in 1861, which described the students as *'decent, respectable, and virtuous boys and girls'.*[252] Evidently, these descriptions reflect wider romantic notions of the ideal child.

The link between the children's transformation and Christianity was regularly made by the RSU, as the students' sudden obedience is presented as being a result of their new knowledge of the Gospel. This connection is detectable in the minutes from the 1848 RSU meeting, which said *'In these schools the children, from being lawless, are obedient- from being downright heathen, they become Christians'.*[253] After joining a ragged school, the children were no longer disordered, unruly 'street-children', but had become settled, peaceful 'home-children', as they now adhered to the middle-class idea of the child. Yet, the RSU portrayed the transformed child as being more than just presentable and well-behaved, as their genuine, God-induced transformation led to the children becoming almost saintly, evidently a world away from the street-children who were *'taught by the worst of all school-masters, the devil'*,[254] as stated in chapter two. In contrast with the untrustworthy, rebellious children seen earlier, those children who attended the ragged school were shown to have an insatiable desire to increase their Biblical knowledge. The children's passion for the Bible is seen in a letter from a

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[248] 'Ragged school union', *The Times*, 20 February 1857, p.10.
[249] Cornwallis, *The philosophy of the ragged schools'*, p.51.
[250] 'Proceedings of a ragged school conference', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.36.
[251] 'Notices of meetings', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.168.
[252] 'Ragged school union', *Daily News*, 20 March 1861.
[253] 'Ragged school union…no.6 June, 1848', p.3.
[254] 'Proceedings of a ragged school conference', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.33.

mother of three ragged school children that was read during a local ragged school meeting in 1850, in which she said that *'she could not punish her children more than keeping them away from the school'*.[255] Correspondingly, in the story of the two sisters that was mentioned above, the girls' transformation is concluded by a letter written by the older sister, detailing her new-found faith; *'I thank God that he has brought me into this good Home, and I must be very thankful, and I must try to do all I can to please God'*.[256] In a more melodramatic manner, an article featured within *The Ragged School Magazine*, after describing the desperate lack of teachers, asked *'Can you imagine anything more heartrending, more shocking, than that there should be thousands of children hungering for the bread of life, and praying for admission within these schools?'*.[257] The emphasis on the children's desire for the Bible seen in this extract hints at the innocence frame, as the text infers the purity of the young students who are seeking the Gospel. In this extract particularly, the function of the 'holy student' language is self-evident, as the article was wrote with the intention of attracting more volunteers for teaching positions, and, naturally, well-behaved children increased the appeal more than the cunning and untameable children described elsewhere. However, the portrayal of the children's saintliness was manifested more explicitly than through their faith and interest in the Bible, as they were painted as nothing less than *'little angels'*.[258]

The transformed street-children were shown as vessels that visibly communicated knowledge of the Gospel; they were no longer as *'wild as desert savages'*[259] on the outskirts of society, but were now an *'ornament of the Gospel they profess'*.[260] The ragged schools upheld the children's ability to Christianise their own wretched families as a principle fruit of their movement, as they were hailed as *'little missionaries- were they not almost like little angels whose goodness turned the heart of their parents, who were afraid to use their usual foul language before them, and who were compelled for very shame to go to a missionary in order to become the equal of their children?'*.[261] It is interesting to note here, before considering two stories which portrayed the street-children as saints, that those children used most clearly as examples of child missionaries were young girls, a preference which may stem from the close connection in the Victorian mind of the female gender with innocence, purity, and godliness which has been described in Zedner's article on female criminality.[262] During a local ragged school meeting in 1846 a moving story was told of a *'little girl, about six or seven years of age'*, whose faith rid her father of drunkenness. The report in *The Observer* narrated how *'The father returned home one evening intoxicated; he began ill-using the mother, when the child begged him not to do so, but he still continued; the child seeing this got out of bed and prayed aloud for the*

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[255] 'Lamb and flag ragged school', *The Times*, 2 May 1850, p.8.
[256] Encouragement and hope: Two sisters', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.66.
[257] 'A plea for teachers', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.197.
[258] 'Ragged school union', *Daily News*, 7 May 1861.
[259] Guthrie, 'A plea for ragged schools', p.12.
[260] 'Ragged schools reviewed: The tree and its fruit', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.50.
[261] 'Ragged school union', *Daily News*, 7 May 1861.
[262] Zedner, 'Women, crime, and penal responses'.

father. "Pray God, bless dear father, and make father a good father. Amen." This overcame him, and by the Divine blessing he became an altered man'.[263] A markedly similar story was told nearly twenty years later through the long and emotional poem 'Little Bessie: A death-bed sketch', published in *The Ragged School Magazine*, and relating the same basic tale of an angelic young girl and her impact on her drunken father. The account of little Bessie heavily utilised the innocence frame, as she was described as *'a little rosy child* […] *Her face was beaming with delight'.* Bessie's strong personal faith that had been nurtured at the ragged school is mentioned in the first stanza, which tells that *'tho' she was but six years old'* she had *'learned how Jesus died to save her never-dying soul'.*[264] In the very next section of the poem, Bessie is severely ill in bed with little chance of recovery. It is in this context that the poem described how she touchingly explained the Gospel to her father, saying *'"If you'll love the Saviour, father," she whispered in his ear, "You'll go to heaven when you die, and I shall meet you there. And won't you love him, father dear, and meet me up above?"* […] *"I don't know what to do," he sobb'd, -for like a sheep astray, He didn't know the Saviour's fold, nor how to find the way'.* Following this exchange, Bessie decided to give her Bible to her parents so *'That father dear and mother dear, when I am gone away, May read about the Saviour's fold, and by it find the way'.* [265] These two examples show how the transformed child could be shown in a saintly light, as they both acted as the medium by which their parents were led to salvation. The clear parallels between these two stories, which are separated by a significant length of time, once again exhibit the reproduction of familiar imagery and arguments within ragged school discourse.

By comparing the depiction of the transformed street-child with the way in which the unreformed *'street Arabs'* were portrayed, this chapter has shown how the miraculous achievements of the ragged schools were communicated. The way that the transformed street-child came to be almost symbolic of the movement's capability of defeating the pauper problem has been illustrated, as it has been shown how the street-child success stories signified the real possibility of the children overcoming the sub-cultural gap that had kept them as outsiders.

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[263] 'Field lane ragged schools', *The Observer*, 20 December 1846, p.2.
[264] 'Little Bessie: A death-bed sketch', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.142.
[265] 'Little Bessie: A death-bed sketch', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.143.

Conclusion

This research has re-visited and re-told the story of the pauper problem, and has uncovered the provocative arguments utilised by the ragged school movement. Most basically, this investigation of the ragged schools has touched on the question of why the wider child-saving movement emerged. Unlike many accounts of the child-savers, this analysis has sought to acknowledge the amalgamation of influences on the movements through focusing on the ragged schools in particular. It has been shown that the motivating factors of humanitarian concern, fear for society, and evangelical fervour were intertwined in the roots of the movement. Less specifically, the fundamental faith in the possibility of causing a real change and eliminating social problems undoubtedly played a part in the formation of the ragged schools, and it is a belief that finds a clear expression in their communication of the pauper problem which has been deconstructed during this analysis.

The ragged schools have provided a prime example of problematisation, as during this research it has been possible to observe the pauper problem's construction, expansion, and proposed solution within their texts. Within this thesis the notions of deviancy, sub-culture, transformation, and integration have been brought together to shed light on the functionality of street-child depiction in a way that had not yet been done by historians of the child-saving movement. At a basic level, this research has shown that the othering of the street-children cannot be simplistically attributed to one factor, such as *'class racism'*,[266] as Mahood and Littlewood have argued. Beyond this, however, this work has made a significant contribution to the wider debate on problematisation. At the core of this study has been the idea of the solvability of the pauper problem, which laid the foundation of the ragged school movement. The theories of deviancy and sub-culture from Becker[267] and Cohen[268] are largely restricted to the ostracising function of language. In contrast, by analysing the role of 'the hope' in ragged school texts, this research has highlighted the importance of re-integration as the solution to the pauper problem in spite of rhetoric that promoted the notion of a street-child sub-culture. Developing current ideas of problematisation, this study has shown how a problem can be built up around a particular solution, which is presented as the sole answer and 'escape route' within panic-laden texts. More precisely, this investigation has shown how problematisation can be clearly targeted towards accomplishing a particular goal, rather than solely sensationalising or dramatizing a topic. Following on from this, in relation to why the ragged schools problematised child poverty, it has been shown that their documents sought to direct the public's attention towards street-children, and to therefore secure support for 'the answer' they were providing.

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[266] Mahood and Littlewood, 'The "vicious" girl and the "street-corner" boy', p.552.
[267] Cohen, *Folk devils*, p.13.
[268] Cohen, *Folk devils*, p.41.

Concurring with Cohen[269] and Schrover's[270] descriptions of problematisation, this research has shown how the inclusion of wider issues into discourse magnifies the issue in hand. Building on the idea of the attachment of broader problems, this work has shown how the audience-net can be cast further, and the public relevancy increased via the tactical linkage of societal concerns. In this case we have seen that street-children came to be linked with disease, crime, and revolution, which were all substantial contemporary problems in Victorian society. By using frame analysis to identify the recurrence of these broader issues within ragged school material, the centrality of the problem-association as a method of problematising child poverty has been brought to light. Expanding on ideas of the tactical linkage of issues, this study has demonstrated that the proposed solution to the central problem can be convincingly presented as the solution to the attached problems also, resulting in a powerfully appealing prospect that is primarily founded on insinuation, rather than solid argument. Moving beyond the concept of tactical linkage, by using Cohen's theory of symbolisation[271] this research has shown how groups can become synonymously associated with attached problems, which further solidifies their attachment to them, as has been seen in the street-child's synonymy with the criminal that was fostered across ragged school documents.

Finally, this research has provided a greater understanding of the fluidity of categorisation, as it has been shown that despite the children's categorisation as criminals and heathens, these categories were not solid, and were able to shift significantly. In order to convey the pauper problem's solvability it was vitally important that the children were not inherently outcasts, but were potentially redeemable. This study has therefore added a new dimension to Cohen's ideas about the identification and alienation of deviants,[272] as the flexible and impermanent nature of labels has been demonstrated in a new way. Similarly, this study of the ragged schools has powerfully shown how paradoxical arguments can be used side by side. Further than the pity/fear theory of Cunningham,[273] Gilfoyle,[274] and Jackson,[275] this research has found that the children were not only perceived in contrasting ways, but were given incompatible identities, such as the innocent criminal and the doomed hope. Moreover, the importance of categorisation in problematising topics and creating familiarity has been determined by following the ragged school movement's discourse across a twenty-year period, which has revealed the recurring categories and arguments that were persistently recycled over this time frame. By tracking the full cycle of the pauper problem argument, and showing the re-classification of the street-child from the threatening deviant to an angelic and valuable part of society, this research has provided a deeper understanding of problem-solving and the power of imagery.

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[269] Schrover, 'Problematisation and particularisation', p.4.
[270] Cohen, *Folk devils*, p.5.
[271] Cohen, *Folk devils*, p.40.
[272] Cohen, *Folk devils*, p.41.
[273] Cunningham, *The children of the poor*, p.106.
[274] Gilfoyle, 'Street-rats and gutter-snipes', p.855.
[275] Jackson, *Child sexual abuse in Victorian England*, p.7.

'The outcast children's cry', *The Ragged School Magazine***, 1864, p.70**

Beautiful the children's faces,
Spite of all that mars and scars;
To the inmost heart appealing,
Calling forth love's tend'rest feeling,
Steeping all the soul in tears.

Eloquent the children's faces;
Poverty's lean look, which saith,
Save us! Save us! Woe surrounds us;
Little knowledge sore confounds us;
Life is but a ling'ring death!

Give us light amidst our darkness;
Let us know the good from ill:
Hate us not for all our blindness.
Save us- lead us- show us kindness:
You can make us what you will!

We are willing; we are ready;
We would learn if you would teach:
We have hearts that yearn towards duty;
We have minds alive to beauty
Souls that any heights can reach!

Raise us by your Christian knowledge;
Consecrate to man our pow'rs:
Let us take our proper station-
We, the rising generation;
Let us stamp the age as ours!

We shall be whate'er you make us:
Make us wise, and make us good!
Make us strong for time of trial;
Teach us temp'rance, self-denial-
Patience, kindness, fortitude!

We are thousands- many thousands;
Every day our ranks increase:
Let us march beneath your banner-
We, the legion of true honour-
Combating for Love and Peace!

Train us! Try us! Days slide onward-
We can ne'er be young again!
Save us! Save from our undoing;

Save from ignorance and ruin;
Make us worthy to be MEN!

Send us to our weeping mothers,
Angel-stamp'd in heart and brow!
We may be our father's teachers;
We may be the mightiest preachers
In the day that dawneth now!

Such the children's mute appealing;
All my inmost soul was stirr'd,
And my heart was bow'd with sadness-
When a cry, like summer gladness,
Said- "The children's pray'r is heard!
- Mary Howitt

'Little Bessie: A death-bed sketch', *The Ragged School Magazine*, 1864, p.142

I

It was a little cottage, one Sunday afternoon,
A mother listened for her child, whom she expected soon,
And her idle, drunken husband, he sat in silence near,
And scarce a word from him was heard to comfort or to cheer.
But hark! A little footstep now is heard outside the door,
And soon a little rosy child is seated on the floor;
Her face was beaming with delight, while holding up to view
The first reward she'd gained at school, and 'twas the Bible too;
For tho' she was but six years' old, she went to Sunday school,
And learned how Jesus died to save her never-dying soul;
Her teacher, too, had promised her she would a present make,
When she the fifth of Matthew could read thro' without mistake.
So Bessie tried and tried again, when, after many tries,
With trembling voice, and blushing face, she won her teacher's prize;
And day by day some precious text was in her mem'ry stor'd,
And she with childlike faith went on to know and love the Lord.

II

Two years have nearly pass'd away, the child is lying ill;
And though her pain is great, she knows it is her Father's will.
And her parents, filled with sorrow, scarce from the bedside moved,
The father was now quite sobered, watching the child he loved.
And the doctor he was standing beside her little bed,
And watched her flutt'ring pulse, he gravely shook his head.
"Do you think I shall get well, sir?" she asked with faltering breath,

"I hope you will," he said; but knew her fast approaching death.
"But do you really think I shall? I'm not afraid to die,
For I shall go where Jesus is, above the bright blue sky."
"I cannot tell, my little girl," the doctor now replied;
"God will take care of you, I know, whatever may betide."
But the child continued sinking, the fever still raged high,
Her little cheeks were crimson flushed, her lips were parched and dry;
And her mind it often wandered, she knew not who was near,
She did not know her mother's voice, nor yet her teacher dear.
When her reason one night returned (her teacher was standing by),
She said, "Do you think, dear teacher, that I am going to die?"
"I think you are, my dear," she said, "and would you like to die?"
"Oh yes," she said, "I want to go to be with God on high;
And when I go dear teacher, I want you, if you will,
To put my Bible in my hand, that I may have it still.
For God will let me carry in to heaven, I suppose,
Because I'm but a little child, my Heavenly Father knows;
And then when I hear Jesus say, 'Let little children come,'
I'll turn and find the very text I learned when here at home.
Will you then, dear teacher, give me my Bible when I'm dead?"
"Yes, yes, my darling that I will," her loving teacher said.
Her father now burst into tears; it almost broke his heart,
To think his little one and he would soon be called to part.
"And shall I not see you again, my little girl," he sigh'd-
And looking on her happy face, with bitter tears he cried.
"If you'll love the Saviour, father," she whispered in his ear,
"You'll go to heaven when you die, and I shall meet you there.
And won't you love Him, father dear, and meet me up above?
I shall want you and mother there, to dwell with me in love."
"I don't know what to do," he sobb'd, -for like a sheep astray,
He didn't know the Saviour's fold, nor how to find the way.
The little Bessie's face was bright; she said, "My teacher dear,
Don't put my Bible in my hands, I want to leave it here;
That father dear, and mother dear, when I am gone away,
May read about the Saviour's fold, and by it find the way.
And then, when I get to heaven, I will to Jesus say,
'I left it with my parents dear, to guide them in the way.'
Be sure you come, dear father," she said, with gasping breath;
"Be sure you come," she faintly said, and fell asleep in death.
And they gazed in breathless silence, till hot tears dim'd the eye;
But the child was safe with Jesus, above the bright blue sky.

III

Below was a cottage dreary, no sound broke on the ear,
But wailing cries, and mourners' sighs, for one no longer here.
Above was a child of glory, safely arrived at home,
And hearing her Father's welcome, "Come in, ye blessed, come."

Below was a father weeping, weeping the tender tear,
For the one he loved most dearly was now no longer here.
Above was a child reclining upon her Saviour's breast,
Around are the white rob'd shining, who from their labours rest.
Below was a mother kneeling beside a coffin grey,
For one had gone whose love had drawn that mother's heart to pray.
Above was a child in glory, happy with Christ on high,
With saints of old, in crowns of gold, above the bright blue sky.
Below was a little Bible, left by a child of love,
To guide her parents in the way that leads to joys above.
The teacher continued teaching, speaking the truth in love,
Leading her children, one by one, to brighter joys above;
Above, where her crown is waiting, waiting for her to wear;
Above, where the child is waiting, to meet her teacher there.
  - J.E.

'A plea for the outcasts', *The Ragged School Magazine*, **1864, p.198**

Why stand ye all day near the vineyard so idle?
O haste to the rescue, there's plenty to do!
There's work in the Ragged Schools all o'er London,
And work in the Shoe-black Society too.

Oh, is it not sad that the poor wretched children
Who know not the Saviour must perish and die;
Whilst Satan stands eagerly ready to grasp them,
And death and destruction are hovering nigh.

Must the door of our Ragged Schools ever be closing
To little ones willing to hear of the Lord,
While thousands in cold selfish ease are reposing,
And care not to rescue the jewels of God?

Will you never respond to the pleading for knowledge
That bursts from the lips of each untutored band?
It would cheer you to look on their sweet large faces,
And feel the warm clasp of each little rough hand.

There is pleasure in being a Ragged School teacher,
There's honour in helping a poor Shoe-black boy;
For the seed sown in love, you shall reap in the future,
And bring home the golden sheaves shouting for joy

Though the poor and the outcast cannot recompense you,
Yet He who once died in the might of his love,

That lowly of earth should inherit his kingdom,
Will surely reward you in heaven above.

O think on the rapture the outcast and the lonely
Would feel when they enter the mansions of light,
When the bright golden portals of glory unclosing,
Will untold of beauty reveal to their sight!

Like the stars that illumine the firmament o'er us,
E'en so shall their spirits be made spotlessly white,
Shine radiant and pure in the kingdom of heaven,
For ever and ever unfading and bright.

Then haste to the rescue, for time is fast and fleeting;
Come, spread the glad news of salvation abroad;
O help us to bring in the outcast and weary,
And gather rich gems for the crown of the Lord!

                                        - Anon

'The ragged school', published in *The Ragged School Magazine*, and re-published in *The Hull and Packet*, 5 January 1849

Hark! Heard ye not that loud and startling shriek!-
From yonder gallery's crowded rows it came;-
'Twas long- 'twas fearful- and it seemed to speak
A mother's anguish, at her offspring's shame:
"Let to himself," to herd with folly's band,
The child at *home* was taught no useful rule,
And no Christian took him by the hand,
To guide his footsteps to the "Ragged School."

Had he been there, he might have learned to bend-
The knee in prayer- to shun the haunts of crime,
And gain the favour of that heavenly Friend
Who reigns enthron'd above the spheres sublime:-
Such might have been his lot; for grace can change
The heart from folly's sway to wisdom's rule:
But some, perchance, may deem this doctrine strange,
And wondering ask- What is a "Ragged School?"

Neglected youths together brought to meet,
With tattered garments and "unwashen heads,"
Fresh from the mud of the river-bank or street,
Rude as the heathen of benighted lands-
These all, in order, taught to go and come,
To prove obedient to their teacher's rule,

Speak when they're told, and, when they're not, be dumb-
This is the picture of a "Ragged School."

Where *noble* hearts and *honourable* minds,
The lowest depths of infant misery reach-
Where beauty's form its purest pleasure finds,
The long-neglected little ones to teach-
Where *kindness* ever works, and seldom fails,
(E'en though the child be stubborn as a mule)-
Where *patient* love o'er waywardness prevails-
There go, and ye shall find a "Ragged School."

To curb the passions, and to mould the will;
To guide the wandering, and bring back the lost;
With Scripture truth the memory's stores to fill;
And seek the soul to save at any cost;
To heal the youth that haunt our public ways,
Foul as the crowds that throng'd Bethsaida's pool;-
This is the effort of our modern days-
This is the glory of the "Ragged School."

The band of labourers, now, though scant and small,
To see *the first fruits*, with delight begin;
A time will come, when, in the sight of all,
The glorious *harvest* shall be gathered in;
And thousands then, in heaven's unclouded calm,
Shall bow to Him who doth all nation's rule.
Strike the sweet harp, and wave the victor's palm,
And bless the Saviour for the "Ragged School."

Christians of Britain, if ye love your land,
Your land of freedom, by the TRUTH made free,
Give of your substance, that each youthful band
That truth may learn, and God's salvation see;
Cleanse not the *'outside of the cup',* alone;
Who does, is but a pharisaic fool;-
But, that its inward brightness may be shown,
Pray for a blessing on the "Ragged School."

                              - J.P.

'The ragged school boy', published in *The Ragged School Magazine*, and re-published in *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, 7 February 1857 p.3.

Here is one, a boy precocious,
Villainously sharp and keen;
Sly in mien, in mind ferocious,
Fit for every wicked scene;
Think with pity
What he might elsewhere have been.

Apt at falsehood, cursing, stealing,
Never blushing, conscience-seared,
Thankless, destitute of feeling,
God he never knew or feared,
And no human
Creature is to him endeared.

See his raiment, filthy, shocking,
Showing many tattered gap,
On his feet no shoe or stocking,
On his uncombed head no cap;
All his motley
Covering was purloined mayhap.

All day long he slowly paces
Through the bustling lanes and streets,
Never looking in the faces
Of the passengers he meets;
Dreading only
The policemen in their beats.

Few and scanty meals he snatches
Gained by arts despised or vile;
Pilfering, begging, vending matches,
Holding horses for a while;
Or with besom
Clearing o'er the street and aisle.

And at midnight he creeps ashamed
To some archway lone and wet,
Or some half-built street unnamed,
Where he may a shelter get,
Hungry, shivering,
With no supper for him set.

Let the face not be disguised!
Though he lives in our own land,
He has never been baptized,
Never taught to understand

God's requirements,
Gospel promise or command.

This is not a baseless libel,
Though we boast how good we are;
He has never heard a prayer:
Yet for heathens
Far less ignorant we care.

O then take him, teach him kindly,
All the true, and right, and good,
And no longer let him blindly
Travel down destruction's road,
Lest your garments
Should be crimsoned with his blood.

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